

CREATING A COMMUNITY OF CONSCIENCE

An analysis of the context and content
of the American Bishops' Pastoral Letter
on War and Peace

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Acknowledgments

This project was conceived after a visit to Rome in May 1985 as a member of a seminar organised by the Anglican Centre. In a series of meetings with officials from the Holy See came one with staff from the Pontifical Commission 'Justice and Peace'. It was there that I first learned of the breadth of the Catholic church's social teaching tradition and of the American bishops' pastoral letters on war and peace and economic affairs.

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The international context in which the bishops wrote their peace pastoral has changed radically, and nowhere are those changes seen more vividly than in Germany, my father's homeland. Peace remains both a challenge to our best energies and a gift from God, and for this reason I dedicate this thesis to Joanna and Peter.

Declaration:

I, Kevin Gerhard Franz, declare that this thesis has been composed by me and is solely my own work.

Of Modern Poetry

The poem of the mind in the act of finding
What will suffice. It has not always had
To find: the scene was set; it repeated what
was in the script.

Then the theatre was changed
To something else. Its past was a souvenir.
It has to be living, to learn the speech of place.
It has to face the men of the time and to meet
The women of the time. It has to think about war
And it has to find what will suffice. It has
To construct a new stage. It has to be on that stage
And, like an insatiable actor, slowly and
With meditation, speak words that in the ear,
In the delicatest ear of the mind, repeat,
Exactly, that which it wants to hear, at the sound
Of which, an invisible audience listens,
Not to the play, but to itself...

Wallace Stevens

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Introduction

On May 3rd 1983, after a two-day meeting in Chicago, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a national pastoral letter on war and peace in the nuclear age. The pastoral bore the title The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and our Response. The bishops approved the final text by 283 votes to 9, setting the seal on a process of preparation which had lasted more than two years and according both the pastoral itself and the drafting committee a high measure of validation.

The process had begun in November 1980 when individual bishops, against the background of a presidential campaign in which the theme of military preparedness had been prominent, requested the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the episcopal conference of the Catholic community in the United States, at its annual meeting, to reexamine its teaching on war and peace. The request met with widespread support and in January 1981 an ad hoc committee chaired by Archbishop Joseph Bernardin began its work.

The committee's process of reflection was characterized by wide-ranging consultations at which theologians and political scientists, peace activists and government officials testified and answered questions. The committee issued drafts of the pastoral letter for their fellow bishops in June 1982, October 1982 and a third in April 1983. Throughout the process the committee's work was subject to the keen interest of lay Catholic opinion, of the Reagan Administration and the media. The committee's work was complemented by a high level of teaching activity by individual bishops, and was affected by the interest of other Catholic hierarchies and by the Holy See itself. This international dimension was most graphically expressed at an 'informal consultation' in Rome in January 1983. The impact of the American pastoral on key elements of NATO strategy was of particular concern to the bishops of West Germany. In the course of 1983 a wide range of episcopal conferences issued statements on war and peace questions.

The issuing of The Challenge of Peace did not mark the end of the American hierarchy's engagement with war and peace. An ad hoc committee was established to promote the pastoral within the church. Subsequently another ad hoc committee was appointed to consider deterrence in the light of the pastoral's teaching.

Chapter One of the present study, 'The American Context of the Pastoral', sets the letter in the context of American Catholicism. For the bishops to address Catholics was hardly novel, but here the bishops also address the wider polity of the United States, seeking to create a community of conscience. The chapter sets out in brief the historical development of the Catholic community, then goes on to examine the roots and significance of this teaching initiative in what has been called a 'new moment'.

Chapter Two, 'The Making of a Pastoral Letter', sets out the process of the pastoral's formation and seeks to characterize it as one in which we see not simply the history of a document but signs of a new way for bishops to act as teachers at a national level. It suggests that the process is of intrinsic importance, and that it demonstrates the virtue of a teaching style marked by consultation, convergence and consensus.

Chapter Three, 'The Content of the Pastoral Letter', gives an account of the shape and argument of this very long and complex document, attentive to the sources of tradition on which it drew and to the audiences it sought to address.

Chapter Four, 'Creating a Community of Conscience: the Ecclesial Context' examines the current debate about the teaching mission of the church, and in particular the teaching function of national episcopal conferences, a function which has aroused considerable controversy. It suggests that the American desire to develop a pastoral magisterium offers the whole church a renewed vision of what teaching can be.

In the conclusion we consider what lasting implications and benefits may accrue from the experience of the production and dissemination of the pastoral letter, within the life of the Catholic church, in its relations with other churches, and in its mission to the world.

CHAPTER 1

The American Context of the Pastoral

'God's own Country?'

'...the general antipathy of the American people for Catholicism which was a colonial inheritance and which...lasted down to the 1960's was [a] powerful influence. The point was neatly summarised in a remark made to the present writer by the late Arthur M Schlessinger Sr., when he said "I regard the prejudice against your church as the deepest bias in the history of the American people."' John Tracy Ellis

'At George Town, in the suburbs, there is a Jesuit college; delightfully situated and, so far as I had an opportunity of seeing, well managed. Many persons who are not members of the Romish Church, avail themselves, I believe, of these institutions, and of the advantageous opportunities they afford for the education of their children. The heights of this neighbourhood, above the Potomac River, are very picturesque: and are free, I should conceive, from some of the insalubrities of Washington.' Charles Dickens

'When asked about the role of the United States in Vietnam, he replied, "I fully support everything it does." Then he added, "My country, may it always be right. Right or wrong, my country."' Francis, Cardinal Spellman

'In a democracy, the responsibility of the nation and that of its citizens coincide. Nuclear weapons pose especially acute questions of conscience for American Catholics. As citizens we wish to affirm our loyalty to our country and its ideals, yet we are also citizens of the world... the virtue of patriotism means

that as citizens we respect and honor our country, but our very love and loyalty make us examine carefully and regularly its role in world affairs, asking that it live up to its full potential as an agent of peace with justice for all people...'

'The Challenge of Peace', paragraphs 326 & 327.

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INTRODUCTION

'It is extraordinary what nonsense English people talk, write, and believe, about foreign countries.'

Letter of Charles Dickens

The sentiments which Charles Dickens expressed in a letter to his friend John Forster should cause us to pause in the face of the task we have begun. Studying the text of the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter of 1983 leads us to consider the context out of which that Letter came, or rather the contexts, for the bishops' reflections and teaching belong both within the context of the Catholic community and within the context of the American polity. On one hand, their initiative is part of the life of the church and the Catholic community its natural audience. Rooted in a long tradition of reflection on war and peace issues the Pastoral is couched in the language of Christian discourse and full of explicit references to the Catholic tradition. On the other, the Pastoral is rooted in the concerns of the America of the 1980's, its address to that wider society self-conscious and explicit, and the involvement of representatives of its political class an integral part of the process which led to the final form of the Letter. Twin contexts, twin addresses: the process which led to The Challenge of Peace demands that we be attentive to both.

Indeed, it can be seen that the abiding reality of the American Catholic community is that of a life moulded by the two contexts, or rather by the question of the relationship between them. The Pastoral of 1983 is both an American and a Catholic document. Part of its significance lies in what it reveals not only of America and the Catholic church, but of what it means to be a Catholic American, an identity which has found a variety of forms in the history of the American Catholic community. As the quotations with which this chapter begins demonstrate, the question of identity has been a determining feature of Catholic America from the outset. The contemporary response to that perennial question of identity is distinctive and new. In the attempt to characterize the nature of the church as revealed by

the Peace Pastoral we will run the risk of which Dickens wrote, in the belief that the 'foreign country' which is the American Catholic church has much to offer the Anglican visitor as he seeks to make sense of what it means for the Church to attempt the creation of a community of conscience. First we must sketch the history of that community.

FROM BISHOP CARROLL TO PRESIDENT KENNEDY:

An historical sketch of the
American Catholic community.

'...the history of the past ends in the present: and the present is our scene of trial: and to behave ourselves towards its various phenomena duly and religiously, we must understand them: and to understand them, we must have recourse to those past events which led to them. Thus the present is a text, and the past its interpretation.'

John Henry Newman

Cardinal Newman in his essay alerts his readers to the nature of the historical task. He also alerts us to the way in which the historical debate over the formation of the American Catholic community is informed by attitudes to its contemporary life.(1) At several junctures in its history the Catholic community engaged in an important transition which seemed to inaugurate a new beginning. Paramount in any account of such transitions is that of the birth of the independent Catholic community in the United States, a newness which was all the more incontestable as it was itself part of the newness of that whole society which emerged in the United States after the War of Independence. It was a society which had yet to find a national character, a way of characterizing what being American meant. That sense of a new beginning affected the churches as much as the nation as a whole. When in June 1784 John Carroll had been appointed by Pope Pius VI as 'Superior of the Mission in the Thirteen United States', in effect a proto-bishop, he was conscious of the implications of that newness for the church. Religious life, Carroll wrote, had 'undergone a revolution, if possible, more extraordinary than

our political one.'⁽²⁾

If the Revolution had brought about a new religious situation it was for the Catholic community 'a blessing and advantage'. In framing that new environment Carroll's was initially an innovative voice, articulating an understanding of Catholicism different from that current in Europe. It took the shape, in those heady years of national independence, of a desire to be free and independent of all foreign influence and jurisdiction. Jay Dolan characterizes it thus,

'the election of a native American as the first bishop in the United States was not only a major step forward in the ongoing organization of the church, but it also symbolized the spirit of independence prevalent among American Catholics...their loyalty to the Papacy was neither exaggerated nor uncritical...closely joined with this independent attitude was a consciousness of being a national church. Like most Americans, Catholics were caught up in the enthusiasm of the birth of a nation. They were Americans, and they wanted their church to reflect the spirit of the new nation, rather than mirror the ethos of a foreign country.'⁽³⁾

The church had, however, a small numerical base. The first federal census in 1790 revealed that there was a population of some 3,929,214 Americans in the settlements which stretched from Maine to Georgia and in the sparse population in the west. Among them lived some 35,000 Catholics, concentrated mainly in the Middle Atlantic states. Although numerically modest there was thus a Catholic community in existence from the beginning, albeit one with little social influence, and enjoying equal citizenship in only five of the thirteen states. Ethnically, it was mainly of Irish and English descent, with the admixture of a considerable number of German Catholics who settled in Pennsylvania in the 1730's.

The first decades of the American church were coloured by the struggles over lay trusteeism, a debate which focused the question of where power lay within the young church, at least at local level, and acted as a litmus test of whether 'democracy', or at least a distinctively American model of organization, could take root within the church. Much of the heat of the debate centred on whether the not uncommon yielding by bishops to the

laity of control over finance and property could extend to the appointment of pastors. Lay trusteeship proved a durable feature of church life in the decades which followed, along with an articulation of the possibility of religious pluralism. To that extent the innovative character of the American Catholic community was durable. But in other areas a more conservative tone soon developed, one that was inimical to the initially common use of English in the liturgy, and which sought to find in Rome guidance in church affairs. The brave 'New World' of the Catholic church offered more promise than fulfilment. The reasons for that lay as much in the impact wrought by immigration and the advent of European clergy, as in a changed attitude in John Carroll and his associates. Between 1790 and 1850 an estimated 1,071,000 Catholic immigrants landed in the United States, a truly catholic mix of French and Irish, Spanish and German:

'...such numbers that they soon completely overshadowed the native Catholics and gave to the Church a foreign coloring that at once baffled its friends and exasperated its enemies.'(4)

Such sustained and rapid growth, and disputes over lay trusteeship, fed Protestant fears of an autocratic, arbitrary system of church government, one that was seen as incompatible with American values. Such suspicion, heightened by economic difficulties at a time of immigration, fed a 'nativist' reaction. This hostility to the Catholic church encouraged a certain separateness of culture by Catholics. Nonetheless it seems they participated actively in political life and in May 1831 Alexis de Tocqueville, newly arrived in the United States, made this judgment on the relationship of Catholicism to democracy:

'...Catholics are very loyal in the practice of their worship and full of zeal and ardour for their beliefs... they form the most republican and democratic of all classes in the United States. At first glance this is astonishing, but reflection easily indicates the hidden causes... While the nature of their beliefs may not give the Catholics of the United States any strong impulsion towards democratic and republican opinions, they at least are not naturally contrary thereto, whereas their social position and small numbers constrain them to adopt them. Most of the Catholics are poor and unless all citizens govern, they will never attain to the government themselves... they are led, perhaps in spite of themselves,

toward political doctrines which, maybe, they would adopt with less zeal were they rich and predominant.(5)

Ellis is warm in his appreciation of the way in which the Church responded to the new situation such mass immigration brought, adjusting potentially conflicting elements, seeking a Catholic pattern which was authentically American through an Americanization programme, which if not a scientific programme, did demonstrate the church's willingness to be an agency which helped assimilate the foreign-born to the developing American way of life. Central to this task was the creation of an educational system, the work of institutions of charity and the establishment of a Catholic press. Nevertheless the sheer scale of the immigration worked against an easy assimilation, while the growing reality of religious freedom allowed the church to expand throughout the states.

'By the time the United States entered the second half of the century, the most disliked and suspect of all the American churches was on the way to becoming the largest and strongest single denomination in the land.'(6)

Growth and the influence which it brought had, perhaps inevitably, been won at the cost of an increasing Europeanization of the church.(7) Moreover, this growth continued in the course of the next half-century, as the Catholic population rose from 1,606,000 in 1850 to 12,041,000 in 1900, a total which reflected the addition by immigration of some five million. In this period, which in national terms was dominated by the experience of civil war and the rapid industrialization which followed, the Catholic community's experience was marked by two features. First, the continuing hostility of powerful and vocal lobbies continued to brand the Catholic church as alien, a charge to which it was vulnerable if not on ecclesial then certainly on ethnic grounds as it received a flood of new immigrants. Secondly, the dominant urban character of the the Catholic community was established. While Ellis laments the poverty of Catholic intellectual activity at this time, he finds within the America of the century's end a pride in the diversity and variety of the American experience, part of which was the product of the

contribution of Catholicism, a faith for some one-sixth of the population.(8)

Ethnic diversity was not the only feature of that pattern of diversity which is such a constant in Catholic American experience. Economic class increasingly made its mark. In fact, ethnic and economic features were intimately related. The most recent immigrants clustered at the bottom of the social scale, in the main those of Polish, Italian, French Canadian and Mexican origin, providing a pool of unskilled labour. Most dramatically, the size of the Catholic middle-class expanded from the mid-century onwards as second and third generation Irish and German Catholics became socially mobile. Their numbers were added to by the small entrepreneurial class within the Polish and Italian communities.

'What was significant...was not so much the shape or the size of each level of society, but the lines of division these levels created within the community. Like ethnicity, economic class divided the community, and in so doing it reinforced the pattern of a multilayered Catholic community.'(9)

Such social changes had ecclesial implications. Those forces which reshaped the Catholic community during the century of immigration favoured the strengthening of what Dolan calls 'the triumph of the clerical church'.(10) In the course of the century the Catholic church moved from being a small, fairly homogeneous community to one that was large and diverse, made up of people of some twenty-eight nationalities at different levels of the social and economic scale. In what he claims was a movement which had parallels in other institutions at this time, church leaders established a greater degree of control over their people. In the face of what seemed like fragmentation, the bishops acted on a desire for unity and order at the cost of a diminished role for the laity. In a church once characterized by the polyglot, cosmopolitan parish, class and ethnically based parishes became its distinctive features under the control of a more assertive episcopate.

Issues of power, of belonging and indeed of the nature of the church continued to refract from the everpresent question of how a church continually refreshed by immigration could develop a stable American personality. An interesting light is cast on this in the course of a struggle in the 1920's between Polish clergy and the Americanizing policies of the bishops. A submission to Rome by the hierarchy included this powerful statement of what the term 'Americanization' meant, and by implication what was most valuable in the American context:

'It is of the utmost importance to our American nation that the nationalities gathered in the United States should gradually amalgamate and fuse into one homogeneous people and, without losing the best traits of their race, become imbued with the one harmonious national thought, sentiment and spirit, which is to be the very soul of the nation. This is the idea of Americanization. This idea has been so strongly developed during the late war that anything opposed to it would be considered as bordering on treason.'(11)

Dolan suggests, but does not develop, the idea that the bishops and their people had different desires at this time. If the people wanted the church to act as a sustainer of cherished national memories, to nurture those who felt outside American society, then the bishops, he judges, wanted to be 'insiders', accepted as part of mainstream America. To gain this, the church had to shed foreign loyalties. It was, it would seem, not simply a survival motif, acculturation in the quest for toleration, but rather the establishment of the ground for an expanded public role. While this is suggestive of the possibilities offered to the church of the 1950's it was a simple desire to be 'at home' that had been expressed strongly by Archbishop Ireland sixty years earlier:

'What I do mean by Americanization is the filling up of the heart with love for America and for her institutions. It is the harmonizing of ourselves with our surroundings, so that we will be as to the manner born and not as strangers in a strange land, caring but slightly for it, and entitled to receive from it but meagre favours. It is the knowing of the language of the land and failing in nothing to prove our attachment to our laws, and our willingness to adopt, as dutiful citizens, all that is good and laudable in its social life and civilization.'(12)

This does seem to be a very powerful statement of the 'outsider' church, yearning to be 'at home', and in no wise aiming at its transformation once that had been accomplished. It was that latter goal arguably revealed in the preparation of the 1983 Pastoral, which demonstrates the revolution in the Catholic church's self-understanding. At the beginning of the century such a transforming role was still far off: the question of institutional maturity had still to be addressed.

In 1908 Pius X issued an apostolic constitution which declared that the church in the United States had been removed from the jurisdiction of the Congregation de Propaganda Fide and placed the American church on the same basis as the churches of Europe. It was, in other words, no longer regarded as missionary territory. This for Ellis is a convenient point of departure for describing the church as one 'come of age', having achieved 'adulthood' as an institution.(13)

This institutional maturity is seen most clearly in the response to the experience of the First World War. The patriotic response of the Catholic community was not in doubt.(14) It elicited as part of that response a new structure which, in some ways, acted as a precursor of the fully developed collegial structure which came into being after the Council. In 1917, to aid the coordination and cooperation of numerous Catholic agencies the National Catholic War Council was formed.(15) Operating under an administrative committee of bishops it acted as a very effective agency in almost every aspect of Catholic participation in the war effort, from providing assistance to chaplains to promoting war-loan drives. Responding to its success certain bishops became convinced that some permanent organization should continue to coordinate Catholic affairs after the war. Thus in 1919, by the overwhelming vote of the American hierarchy, the National Catholic Welfare Council was created. A small caucus of bishops hostile to the initiative successfully lobbied Rome to oppose it, playing on fears that it might encourage the rise of a 'national' church in the United States. Only after diplomacy was the new

agency rescued, with the term 'Conference' replacing 'Council' in the title.(16)

Arguably, the new Conference, which had a purely advisory role and did not infringe the authority of diocesan bishops, might have been seen as less significant had it not been for the activity of one of its five departments, Social Action, directed by Mgr. John Ryan until his death in 1945. Fogarty suggests that, despite its structure and organization, it was much less indicative of a genuine collegiality than that implicit in the pattern of collegial gatherings of the bishops in the nineteenth century. Although it was an episcopal conference, its status, he argues, was only 'tolerated' by Rome in 1922, and more importantly, regarded by the bishops not as an expression of collegiality, but rather as a convenient way of coordinating Catholic efforts at national level.(17) Nevertheless, even if the structure should not be seen as too closely akin to the collegial structures associated with the Second Vatican Council, the use made of that structure by Ryan leads us into one of the great themes Ellis identifies as important in this period, the church's engagement with social questions.(18)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century a self-conscious social-gospel tradition, fired by a concern for justice and distinguished from traditional Catholic understanding of corporal works of mercy, began to emerge within the United States Catholic community. There were two catalysts in this change. The 1860's and 1870's saw an increased activity in the organization of trades unions, which had an obvious appeal to a predominantly working-class Catholic culture. The Irish community in particular was active, and such commitment led to their involvement with the Knights of Labor, an organization which at first met with antagonism from the clergy. On the international level there was the impact on the church of Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891. The encyclical did not capture the hearts and minds of the whole church, however. Its failure to kindle the American church despite an initially favourable response revealed the weakness of the church in two respects.

First, the hierarchy was too caught up with internal ecclesial issues to respond to the call for social justice. Debates over issues such as schooling dominated the episcopate's agenda, while for the laity the growth of a devotional piety, far from nurturing a passion for social justice, forwarded a private, personalized view of the faith. Secondly, and more tellingly, the American Catholic community lacked the intellectual resources needed to adapt the principles in the encyclical to the American context.(19) Nevertheless, the seeds of a social-gospel tradition were present, even if more at the level of action than of reflection. Far more promising was an initiative in the aftermath of the First World War, the so-called 'Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction' published in 1919. It reflected a conviction, one that was widely shared, that the pattern of postwar America needed to be reflected upon. The Program was in fact wholly Ryan's, and embodied a detailed set of principles on subjects such as minimum wage, unemployment, health and old age insurance, the need for a program of public housing, an age limit for child labour and a national employment service.(20)

The promise of the thinking which lay behind the Program was not fulfilled, and the bishops lost interest, as the world economy moved into financial crisis and recession. It was possible to see by 1930, Dolan suggests, 'a new dimension of public religion, or what can be called a social gospel' as part of the Catholic tradition in the United States.(21) For the moment its potential remained latent.

This was not the only latent capacity in the church. The power of the community had yet to be applied to national political life. Ellis identified as 'the most serious weakness in contemporary American Catholicism' its failure to make more of a mark on the life of the nation.(22) Not only was the presidential campaign of Alfred Smith in 1928 and the violent propaganda battle he faced a sign of the deep anti-Catholic bias of which Schlessinger spoke (23), it was accompanied by the failure of the Catholic population to approach proportionate representation at levels higher than the municipal. Ellis

suggests that the sluggishness of the Catholic community at national political level was the result not only of anti-Catholic bias, but its own lack of an intellectual tradition at once American and Catholic. The pain Ellis experienced at the hostility to the Catholic way can be gauged from his treatment of the vexed topic of the separation of church and state, a debate which he portrays as one kindled only after the end of the Second World War.

'Catholics have been in America for four centuries, and their history reveals the maximum of loyalty and service to every fundamental ideal and principle upon which the Republic was founded and has endured. There are now nearly fifty million Americans whose religious faith and theological beliefs are - and will remain - those of the universal Church of Rome. American Catholics are here to stay...It is obvious that Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and men of no religious faith are here and will remain, and that they will, therefore, have to go on living together. The welfare and future strength of the Republic demand that this fact be recognized by Americans of every religious faith and that they act accordingly. To do less were to abdicate the responsibility which citizenship imposes upon us all.'(24)

Yet despite this, the dominant mood of the community was not one of inhibition and frustration. As Dolan presents it there was in fact a general spirit of confidence, a 'Catholic boosterism' which permeated the whole Catholic community. Catholics were 'more and more like the rest of the American population...[and]...proudly celebrated their religion and their Americanism.'(25)

It is this combination of that sense of a church where the potential for influence had yet to be tapped, and where a sense of identity with American culture, at least for the white Catholics, was complete, which seemed to find in the election of John Kennedy an emblematic event which signalled a new era. It was just at this point, however, that the glimpse of the shape of that new era, the 'new moment', could be seen to reveal a different future from the one the 1950's promised.(26) The new moment was not to be a springboard for Catholic power, the opportunity for a new self-confident Catholic community to flex its political muscle. Rather, the new moment was to be expressed in changed relations within the church, evidenced most

clearly in the Second Vatican Council, and changed ideas of what the church's task was. If The Challenge of Peace revealed a new public role for the Catholic church, it also revealed a new way of being the church.

THE CONTEXT AND THE TASK I
Creating a Community of Conscience
Catholics and the American Proposition

Any discussion of the relationship between the bishops and the wider political community in the United States has to take into account that great shibboleth of American political culture, the separation of church and state. In establishing the political context in which the contemporary American Catholic church expresses its life we have to be attentive both to constitutional theory, or rather popular perceptions of it, and to the practice of politics. In particular we must recognize the peculiar tension set up by past perceptions of the danger for the 'American proposition' posed by a numerically strong Catholic community within the nation. From the outset of the American experiment the church-state question has been seen as providing peculiar difficulties for the Catholic church.

Disestablishment and the free exercise of religion, enshrined in the First Amendment to the American Constitution, are commonly regarded as core elements in the American way. The separation of church and state and a commitment to religious liberty would seem to have the characteristic of a foundation myth, critical not only for the practical import of the concepts but also for their emblematic character. A forceful statement of this can be found in Thomas Jefferson's famous letter to the Danbury Baptists Association:

'Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legislative powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof", thus building a wall of separation between church and state'. (27)

Wogaman in his study of Christian perspectives on politics argues that although Jefferson's metaphor with its implications has not been applied with literal force, the highly individualistic conception of religion he advances has been widely shared. It is

this conception of religion, augmented by the constitutional arrangements, which posed a particular challenge to the Catholic community. Wogaman demonstrates that the doctrine of separation itself need not imply a position of mutual hostility. On the contrary, he argues that for the mainstream Protestant churches the United States is an exemplar of the 'friendly' separatist tradition, that is one in which the separation of church and state might be better described as positing a nonestablishment of religion, undergirded by the desire to establish the primacy of religious liberty.(28) Further, the doctrine of separation does not indicate that religious communities and the wider public community are discrete entities. As the nineteenth century observer Alexis de Tocqueville noted:

'religion in America takes no direct part in the government of society, but nevertheless it must be regarded as the foremost of the political institutions of that country.'(29)

James Reichley in his Religion and American Public Life submits the conclusion that study of the roots of America's constitution demonstrates that the founders of the nation did not have it in mind to exclude religion from public influence.(30) Religion was to be an important source of that public virtue on which the democratic experiment was predicated. Moral values and virtues were to be the mediating link between the private and the public, the religious and the political. In this, the church's role was quite specific, its main social contribution the nurture of virtue among its members and the wider citizenry. This educative and nurturing role could be augmented by a limited role in the policy process. It was here that danger lay. Too vigorous a role could be a source of peril for the church, laying it open to charges of sectarian lobbying:

'...if the churches become too involved in the hurly-burly of routine politics, they will eventually appear to their members and to the general public as special pleaders for ideological causes or even as appendages to transitory political factions. Each church must decide for itself where this point of political and moral peril comes.'(31)

Despite the generally recognized contribution which the church could make as a mediating structure, the emblematic significance

of the doctrine of separation which constituted the core of the American political tradition set peculiar difficulties for the Catholic community. The 'American way' was seen as radically dissonant with the prevailing Catholic ecclesiology. The popular perspective on the separation of church and state militated against the Catholic church's role in American society, raised questions about the locus of the Catholic's fundamental loyalty, and pitted the American libertarian tradition against a church whose power-structure seemed wholly inimical. It was this radical incompatibility which seemed to some to be bridged by two emblematic events, one political, one ecclesial; the election of John F Kennedy to the White House and the Vatican Council's Declaration on Religious Freedom, Dignitatis Humanae. As we shall see below, the Kennedy election seemed to signal the political maturity of the Catholic community. What Kennedy did for the political dimension of the Catholic and the American proposition the Vatican Council seemed to do for the constitutional dimension.

If in the past the question of how it was possible to be both American and Catholic had underlain popular attitudes to the church, and had dictated a conscious strategy of accommodation on the part of the hierarchy, there seemed in the years between Kennedy's election and the Second Vatican Council to be a convergence of forces which promised the inauguration of a new moment for the Catholic church. In John Courtney Murray the American church produced a reflective theologian whose work on the question of America and Catholicism suggested a move beyond the sterile pitting of the one against the other so recently evidenced in the nativism of Paul Blanshard.(32) Murray's interest in the fundamental character of what he called the American 'proposition'(33) was complemented by John Kennedy's election and the Declaration on Religious Freedom, which Weigel calls

'the special gift of American Catholicism to the universal Church at Vatican II... the declaration not only vindicated Murray's formulation of Catholic church/state theory: it also vindicated the American experience of Catholicism and the Catholic experience of America.' (34)

There seemed to be the scent of opportunity in the air. For critics of the Peace Pastoral this promise of a new dawn faded into grey failure, even into the betrayal of the promise.(35) The 'new moment' arrived, and it was missed. I believe that criticism is mistaken. The complex nexus of political, social and ecclesial change established a new context for the church, one which is encapsulated in the Peace Pastoral and the teaching initiatives which followed. The bishops were not responsible for creating this new moment. They were, however, responsible for the response to it, imaginatively seizing the initiative on a matter of great public concern, and in a manner which demonstrated how the American way of public discourse had found a home within the church. It demonstrated in summary the possibility of the Catholic community moving to the centre of American culture.

That move to the centre reveals the new place which the Catholic church enjoys in American culture. Attendant on it is both risk and change for the church. Here it may be useful to note the contribution of Bryan Hehir to this debate.(36) Hehir's thinking is of interest not only because of his role in the drafting of the Pastoral Letter, but because he alerts us to the significance of the conciliar documents on this question. He suggests a sort of dialectic between the two major conciliar documents which addressed this theme. On the one hand the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes propelled the church into a closer engagement with the world, making it more 'political' in terms of broad cultural engagement; on the other, the Declaration on Religious Liberty freed the church from being too enmeshed in its relationship with the state. Accepting the distinction between society and state, he suggests this conciliar dynamic shows the way in which the church can competently address the political. If the church's social role must always be ultimately religious in character, its exercise has consequences which are politically significant. Its engagement in the political arena can then be described as 'indirect'. The casuistry of keeping the church's engagement in the political order 'indirect' involves an endless series of choices and distinctions, but he says that the effort

must be made precisely because of the unacceptability of the alternatives to indirect engagement: either a politicised church, or else a church in retreat from human affairs. The first erodes the transcendence of the Gospel, and the second betrays the incarnational dimension of the Christian faith.

The search to understand the implications of the 'indirect' nature of the church's engagement of which Hehir writes, leads to the consideration of the church's function as a mediating institution in American socio-political life.(37) The relationship between democracy and mediating structures was the subject of a seminar sponsored by the American Enterprise Institute in 1979.(38) Philip Wogaman addressed the topic of the church as a mediating institution within American society in two lectures.(39) Accepting as a starting-point the definition offered by Berger and Neuhaus, he went on to suggest a number of ways in which this illuminated the 'place' of the American Catholic church in its political task.

An indirect address is not necessarily a weak one, but to be an actor in the political process colours the church community itself. As we will see below, it can be argued that democratic societies are best served by mediating institutions which in the inner organization of their life reflect that democratic spirit. Wogaman suggests that the structure of a mediating institution acts both to represent and reinforce the values shared by its members. The nature of that structure should not be dissonant with the values it proposes, or as Wogaman puts it, 'the medium may prove to be the real message.'(40) If such integrity is lacking the undemocratic church deprives its members of learning what it is to participate in the democratic process. It is then, he argues, that its members on entering the political arena may contribute more to social dissension and partisan advocacy. This leads to the wider question of who it is that speaks for the churches. If church leaders do not speak for a majority of their people, he argues, it is the business of good politicians to offer a challenge to such unrepresentativeness, to 'smoke them out'!

Does this mean that only when a church has 'come of age' in structural terms that its mediating function can be authentic? If so, what are the consequences for the American Catholic church? The Catholic community would already reflect another of Wogaman's requirements, namely that to act as a mediating structure, a church has to move beyond the simple promotion of its institutional life.

It is this debate which makes The Challenge of Peace so illuminating. The new 'place' of the Catholic church, a blend of social, ecclesial and political factors, enabled it to move to a new relationship with American culture. The old pattern of dissonance was eroded. The church was able to become a mediating institution in a way analagous to the Protestant tradition in the past. Moreover, this change was under way at the moment when that Protestant tradition was undergoing strain.(41)

This new moment was far from fostering a Catholic triumphalism. The changed social composition of the church, the new ecclesial models encouraged by the Council, and the tensions within the church over official teaching on sexual matters, combined to inject pluralism into the inner life of the church. At the very moment it was equipped to help create a community of conscience in the nation, the church itself saw the growth of pluralism which mirrored the American democratic way, and which promoted within its own life the establishment of a new conception of the community of conscience. A Catholic church at home in America, in short, would continue to change both America and itself.

THE CONTEXT AND THE TASK II

Creating a Community of Conscience

A Theologian and Two Bishops

John Tracy Ellis had lamented the intellectual weakness of the Catholic community. In the years immediately before the Council the Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray had made a powerful intellectual contribution to the debate on church and state. A generation later, from within the hierarchy which produced The Challenge of Peace, came reflections on the wider task of the Church which demonstrated a willingness to reflect on what it means for the church to be a 'public church'.(42)

In his eulogy for Murray's intellectual endeavour entitled 'The Murray Project', George Weigel suggests that his contribution to the Church was expressed in three concentric circles of thought.(43) At its centre lay the question of religious freedom, and his attempt to frame a theory which extended the Catholic tradition in the light of the contemporary American situation and which was to be enfolded and validated in the great conciliar document. The second circle of thought concerned the relationship of the American Catholic to the American experience of democracy and pluralism, a project which led to the contesting of the 'new nativism' of the 1950's and the beginnings of ecumenical dialogue, in itself an indicator of the changes which made possible the Kennedy election. The third circle was the most ambitious, and for us in this context the most suggestive. Weigel argues that here Murray moved from the classic articulation of a defence of the place of the Catholic church in American society to a radical questioning of that society itself. What were its moral roots? If America was a proposition to be tested, rather than an achieved state, what were its moral foundations? Could it survive if its public discourse was denuded of those religiously-based values which had been intrinsic to its founding? Weigel's conclusion is that Murray's role was not simply one of interpreter, the 'codifier of Catholic acculturation', able to present Catholicism to American Protestantism in a way which was palatable, and in parallel

fashion presenting the American tradition of religious liberty in a way which was acceptable to the wider Church.(44) Indeed,

'...Murray's essential purpose was never to make Catholicism 'acceptable' within American political culture according to the criteria of that culture. Murray's ambitions were considerably larger: to provide the moral-theoretical underpinnings for a liberal-democratic experiment in America. Murray's grand project was to bring into explicit philosophical and theological understanding American Catholicism's lived experience of *tranquillitas ordinis*, and to do so in a way that would redound to the common good of the entire experiment.'(45)

Murray's intellectual 'project' can be seen as one which moved the focus away from the petrified question of the compatibility of Americanism and Catholicism, and sought to pose a new question which would illuminate both the Christian community and American society by recalling the fundamental character of the American experiment. His approach was developed most fully in his We Hold These Truths, first published in 1960.

The flavour of his thesis can be gauged in the following extract in which he wrote of the 'American Proposition':

'Neither as a doctrine nor as a project is the American Proposition a finished thing. Its demonstration is never done once for all...its historical success is never to be taken for granted, nor can it come to some absolute term...The epistemology of the American Proposition was made clear by the Declaration of Independence in the famous phrase: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident...'. Today when the serene, and often naive, certainties of the eighteenth century have crumbled, the self-evidence of the truths may legitimately be questioned. What ought not to be questioned, however, is that the American Proposition rests on the forthright assertion of a realist epistemology. The sense of the famous phrase is simply this: 'There are truths, and we hold them, and we here lay them down as the basis and inspiration of the American project, this constitutional commonwealth....What is at stake is America's understanding of itself. Self-understanding is the necessary condition of a sense of self-identity and self-confidence, whether in the case of an individual or in the case of a people. If the American people can no longer base this sense on naive assumptions of self-evidence, it is imperative that they find other more reasoned grounds for their essential affirmation that they are uniquely a people, a free society...The complete loss of one's identity is, with all propriety of theological definition, hell. In diminished forms it is insanity. And it would not be well for the American giant to go lumbering about the world today, lost and

mad.'(46)

What Murray was calling for was not a legislative programme, but the reaffirmation of what he called America's 'calendar of values', its fundamental sense of itself as a nation, based not on a sentimental reading of the past but on propositions which were true, yet at risk from the very pluralism which was the mark of American society.

The pluralism which endangered the survival of the American proposition was not that of the dialogue between Christian confessions and faiths, but rather that which fostered secularism. It was secularism which posed a threat not only to the world of faith but to the very notion of one society in which multiple pluralisms were at play.

There is much of interest in Murray's argument, but in this context it is his challenge to the Catholic church which is germane. His claim for it is no less than that at the end of the search for the guardian of the American tradition of public philosophy is found the Catholic community:

'Catholic participation in the American consensus has been full and free, unreserved and unembarrassed, because the contents of that consensus - the ethical and political principles drawn from the tradition of natural law - approve themselves to the Catholic intelligence and conscience. Where this kind of language is talked, the Catholic joins the conversation with complete ease. It is his language. The ideas expressed are native to his universe of discourse.'(47)

Murray's thought on a public philosophy was being refined at the same time as the great social changes within American Catholicism sketched below which allowed the emergence of a new confident Catholic American. Setting aside the innovative features of his thought, the mood of confidence in the distinctive contribution which he recognized the Catholic heritage could make to America seems of a piece with the 'new moment' of the 1950's. Weigel is surely right to defend Murray from any trace of denominational smugness in this regard. Rather, his reflection was born out of a sense of impending crisis in American political society.

Critics of Murray's analysis may argue that he was altogether too sanguine about the moral character of the American democratic experiment,(48) but his valuing of that tradition is far removed from the uncritical nationalism of past church leaders.

The participation he argued for implied the exploitation of the 'Catholic moment', a moment simultaneously of opportunity for the Catholic community and of peril for the body politic. By bringing to bear on this public crisis those constant features of its public philosophy, the church could rescue the American proposition, an irony which in view of the older assumptions of their incompatibility, Weigel suggests Murray both recognized and enjoyed.

Was that opportunity grasped by the bishops? Not at once. The bishops of Murray's time showed little sign of matching his intellectual subtlety or his wider vision of the church. Despite the attempt of conservative critics of the Peace Pastoral to enlist Murray as the guardian spirit of the heritage which the bishops abandoned, it is the contemporary hierarchy which demonstrates an approach to public discourse matching Murray's in its boldness, and which moves beyond it. The contours of that approach emerge in the making of The Challenge of Peace. In what follows we see it reflected through the prism of two episcopal reflections.

Working from the text of an address by Auxiliary Bishop Joseph Sullivan we see one bishop's reflections on what the characteristics of a 'public' church might be, and how those characteristics are reflected in The Challenge of Peace. We review then how such a view of the church's task animates the way in which it seeks to address questions of morality as that has been advanced by Joseph Bernardin in his attempt to promote the so-called 'consistent ethic of life'.

Sullivan identified 'three basic resources' which all church communities could bring to the public life of society. These elements were ideas, institutions and a constituency. If there were indeed an open moment for the religious voice in public affairs what specifically Catholic perception of those resources could be brought to bear?(49)

In speaking of ideas, Sullivan intends a willingness to express a vision offered to a whole society, and a corresponding willingness to work for its fulfilment. This notion of a public church is not new, for he sees it both supported and fostered by the Catholic ecclesial tradition. It is therefore something which flows from the church's nature and vocation. To be a public church means nothing less than assuming a responsibility for the life of a whole society, and acting on an obligation to help shape the whole life of the civic community. Although he does not make this explicit, this view goes far beyond the promotion of a narrow sectarian interest, beyond an advocacy of policies and attitudes which connect directly with the inner, domestic life of the church. It implies an obligation in respect of the entire political, economic, social and legal life of the community. Sullivan is careful to note that there are proper limits to the church's public role, and he seems to indicate that the impact of the American debate on church and State is one of the clarifying agents in deciding where such limits lie. Yet there seems to be no limit to the church's desire to offer such a public vision.

Intrinsic to this vision-giving is a willingness to test that vision out in dialogue. Sullivan is both realistic and confident in the way in which he pictures this dialogue. Society contains many conceptions of the 'good'. Dialogue brings with it an openness to those differing visions. A public church demands of itself a

'willingness to enter the political give and take where compromise in the positive sense is a reality.'(50)

There can be no compromise on fundamental principles, but in the application and shaping of those principles lies the real task.

He dismisses that approach which would shield general principles from the polluting effect of dialogue:

'...a public church recognizes the risks of involvement, but it also recognizes the risk of remaining aloof from the public dialogue, secure with one's principles but with no method for shaping the fabric of society with those values and principles.'(51)

There can be few clearer statements of the church's move from a mood of defensiveness to one which confidently attempts to live out the life of the 'public' church. That confidence is seen not only in openness to dialogue but also in willingness to find a way of expressing the church's convictions in a way which is not only truthful, but appropriate to a culture where the truth depends upon the persuasiveness of the presentation. Sullivan instances the Pastoral Letters on peace and on the economy as illustrative of this at work. The offering of a vision, the testing of the consequences of that vision in public dialogue, the search for language conducive to public discourse, all seem to be intrinsic to this view of the church's public vocation.

Sullivan's view suggests that the vocation is tested by its effectiveness. It would be impoverishing, he suggests, to deny the church proper access to the prophetic tradition, and the freedom on occasion to act in a prophetic way. Yet the prophetic tradition of its nature is always at the margin. The task of a public church is to be heard. This seems to imply that it is the very specificity of teaching which is the test of its effectiveness, the manner in which, for example, the prophetic call is

'related to the complex grid of legislation and policy through which change is effected in an industrial democracy.'(52)

A public church then, at least one operating in a liberal-democratic context, is one which contributes by engagement, by the promotion of vision, by dialogue, by careful attention to the specific assessments of policy choice.

Sullivan, in his treatment of the 'ideas' behind a public church, tells us little about the source of such ideas. He makes passing reference to the papal blend of biblical and philosophical categories, but does not develop how that blend works within the American context. In particular, he leaves undisclosed the potential conflict between the biblical approach on questions of justice and peace which have informed the great 'peace-church' tradition, and the subtle operation of such a fundamental building-block in Catholic 'ideas' as the just war tradition. Rather he seems interested in how the 'blend' of Catholic ideas is to be proposed in the public debate, what language of address is to be used, and the impact in turn of the reception of that address.

One of the most interesting tests of whether the Catholic church can engage in the task Sullivan describes comes in the initiative which is associated with Joseph Bernardin, the call for the development of a 'consistent ethic of life'. First framed by Bernardin in an address at Fordham University in New York in December 1983, some six months after the publication of The Challenge of Peace, it is a call which he has gone on to develop and refine.(53) In that speech Bernardin drew attention to the link which had been established in the Pastoral Letter between abortion and nuclear war. He set himself the task of arguing the case for that linkage, and in a further speech at St Louis University in March 1984, expanded the scope to include questions such as capital punishment, euthanasia and world hunger as components in this 'consistent ethic'.(54) Dubbed the 'seamless garment'(55), Bernardin's search discloses the way in which he at least views the public policy role of the church in the light of the Peace Pastoral. As he reflected on it, Bernardin saw the new task as contingent on the 'relationship of our Catholic moral vision and American culture.'(56) Bernardin's thinking helps us understand how the chief architect of the Peace Pastoral conceived the Church's vocation to create a community of conscience.

What shape did Bernardin suggest the consistent ethic might take? The 'central idea' in the Peace Pastoral, he argued, was that of the sacred nature of human life with the corresponding responsibility incumbent on men and women to protect and preserve it.(57) That sense of the transcendent value of human life has been reflected, he suggested, within the Catholic tradition by that absolutist stream of opinion that life may never be taken. Such a view has never been dominant, however, and the real character of Catholic teaching has been rather that there should always be a presumption against taking life. Such a view allows some narrowly-defined exceptions, most notably that developed in the just war tradition. The nub of the debate would seem then to revolve around the nature and scope of the exceptional. It is here that Bernardin senses a change, a 'perceptible shift of emphasis' both in church doctrine and pastoral practice which has strengthened the presumption against taking life and made the exceptions more restrictive.(58) He is swift to demonstrate that the change is not peculiar to the United States. Indeed it is evidenced in papal texts, in theological thinking as well as pastoral practice, and it has developed over three decades.

What reasons are there for such a shift? Bernardin suggests the impact of technology, an impact which 'induces a sharper awareness of the fragility of human life.'(59) Moreover, the impact has been felt on a wide range of moments 'along the spectrum from womb to tomb', creating a combination of challenges which cries out for a consistent ethical response. Finely honed and carefully structured, the ethic he seeks would be based on values, principles, rules and application to specific cases. Thus the principle which prohibits the directly intended taking of innocent human life is at the heart of Catholic teaching on abortion, with its conclusion that direct attack on fetal life is always wrong.(60) It likewise yields the most 'stringent, binding and radical' conclusion reached in the Peace Pastoral, namely that directly intended attacks on civilian centres is always wrong. The consistency which this exemplifies seems to be for Bernardin not simply a coalition of similar conclusions.

Rather the consistency of the application of the principle is the guarantor of its truth. Thus,

'the use of the principle exemplifies the meaning of a consistent ethic of life. The principle which structures both cases, war and abortion, needs to be upheld in both places. It cannot be successfully sustained on one count and simultaneously eroded in a similar situation...I contend the viability of the principle depends upon the consistency of its application.'(61)

Bernardin went on to suggest another approach to consistency. Not only was it right to speak of it as arising out of Catholic principle, it arose also out of the relationship between 'right to life' and 'quality of life', although he admitted that this relationship was imperfectly understood within the Catholic community. He summed up its implications in a passage which begins to reveal the public policy task demanded by the search for the consistent ethic:

'If one contends, as we do, that the right of every fetus to be born should be protected by civil law and supported by civil consensus, then our moral, political and economic responsibilities do not stop at the moment of birth. Those who defend the right to life of the weakest among us must be equally visible in support of the quality of life of the powerless among us: the old and the young, the hungry and the homeless, the undocumented immigrant and the unemployed worker. Such a quality of life posture translates into specific political and economic positions on tax policy, employment generation, welfare policy, nutrition and feeding programs, and health care. Consistency means that we cannot have it both ways: we cannot urge a compassionate society and vigorous public policy to protect the rights of the unborn and then argue that compassion and significant public programs on behalf of the needy undermine the moral fiber of the society or are beyond the proper scope of governmental responsibility. Right to life and quality of life complement each other in domestic social policy. They are also complementary in foreign policy...' (62)

Sullivan had given notice that the vocation of building a public consensus led inevitably to exposure in the arena of public debate. Principles proclaimed at the edge of public debate would be of little significance. Participation brought attendant risks, but had to be embraced if the church were to mould the public mind in the way it sought. Bernardin makes this very

point as he considered the relationship between Catholic ethics and the American ethos:

'a consistent ethic of life must be held by a constituency to be effective. The building of such a constituency is precisely the task before the church and the nation.'(63)

Here he acknowledged that the church was not a univocal community. The shaping of a Catholic consensus on the spectrum of life issues was not already complete. It would be facilitated by dialogue,

'the kind of dialogue...which the pastoral letter generated on the nuclear question...the same searching intellectual exchange, the same degree of involvement of clergy, religious and laity, the same sustained attention in the catholic press.'(64)

Bernardin looked to the follow-up process to the Peace Pastoral as the way of providing this dialogue, using the momentum it had provided.

Building a church consensus was not enough in itself. There remained the larger task of sharing the vision with society at large. At this point Bernardin seemed more aware of the challenge than the response. How was a Catholic position, rooted in a religious vision, to be stated to a 'radically pluralistic' society? Such a statement would have to be attentive to style and substance. Bernardin proposed a rule for that address:

'we should maintain and clearly articulate our religious convictions, but also maintain our civil courtesy. We should be vigorous in stating a case, and attentive in hearing another's case: we should test everyone's logic, but not question his or her motives.'(65)

Given such a style of address, the case the church makes will, like the Peace Pastoral, draw support from non-Catholics who find the moral analysis compelling. The new task of proclaiming the consistent ethic will be made easier as a result of what

Bernardin recognized as a

'new openness today in society to the role of moral argument and moral vision in our public affairs.'(66)

Here we see the outlines of what it means for the bishops to attempt the creation of a community of conscience. The task has

its roots in a confidence about what it means to have a moral vision of the shape of society. That vision is the product of fundamental religious principle. Integral to the church's vocation is the sharing of that vision with the wider society, and this is best accomplished by entering into dialogue with those agencies which have power to shape society, submitting the vision's articulation to the test. This commits the church to the risky enterprise of developing specific teaching, based indeed on principle, but open to challenge and change. The teaching vocation, this implies, is not a last word but a first word, promoting the establishment of a community of discourse.

The effectiveness of such a teaching agency will no longer be determined by the extrinsic authority of its authorship, or even by the abiding truth of its principle, so much as by its effectiveness in creating a community of conscience in the nation. To accomplish this, the church leadership must reflect with the whole church, attend to the voice of wider society, offer its responsive teaching and enter the debate. That such an approach is possible is evidenced by the process involved in issuing The Challenge of Peace. That such an approach became possible for the church was the result of a complex of social, ecclesial and political change. To aspects of these we must now turn.

THE 'NEW MOMENT'

'By the way, whenever an Englishman would cry 'All right!' an American cries 'Go ahead!' which is somewhat expressive of the national character of the two countries.'

Dickens' American Notes'

Dickens' vignette will serve for us as a way of picturing the character of the American Catholic community in a time of transition, a transition which is marked by the movement from being 'all right' to one which 'goes ahead'. By the 1950's the Catholic church was at home within American culture, and by its integration of divergent ethnic groups had been a major contributor to the emergence of an 'American identity', but its power was still latent. By the time of the Peace Pastoral, we see a church eager to contribute to the wider debate within American society, enabled to become in Marty's phrase a 'public church'. In what follows we will examine some of the trends within the Catholic community which led to this transition, what has been called 'the new moment'. Such a moment, however, is not only the result of changes within the ecclesial community, either in its understanding of its life or in the social dynamics of its constituents. It is also the result of changes within the wider polity. Earlier we made reference to the twin contexts of the Pastoral, and its twin addresses. In what follows we will attempt to sketch some of the contours of the second context, that of the political reality of the American church's position. If the Catholic bishops found themselves eager to contribute to the public debate on the nuclear issue, how receptive would public culture be to that contribution? And further, what would that desire itself demonstrate about the new place of the church?

THE NEW MOMENT I

A church come of age?

In 1989 the American Catholic church celebrated the bicentennial of the creation of its independent hierarchy with the appointment in 1789 of John Carroll as Bishop of Baltimore. Celebrating the bicentennial gave the American bishops an opportunity to affirm the continuities of the Catholic experience in the United States, and to record the history of growth and expansion which the church had known. The celebration also provided a forum in which to assert, in the presence of the Cardinal Secretary of State and the pronuncio, the distinctiveness of the American church and to affirm the bishops' conception of their present task. This was no uncomplicated historical celebration. Alongside other important ecclesial gatherings it came at a time when the debate about the dynamic of a church at once American and Catholic was as significant as it had been in the days of John Carroll.(67)

In the course of a visit to Rome by the Cardinals and Archbishops of the US hierarchy, Archbishop May, the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, had said:

'We have come many miles from our own dioceses...yet we feel that we are at home. Home is where the family dwells, where love lies - and we feel that here.'(68)

There had been times when such sentiments would have aroused in non-Catholics the spectre of a church whose heart and obedience lay outside America. Now, arguably, the sentiments May expressed, whatever their rhetorical flourish, could have been uttered by him as well in Baltimore or Washington as in Rome, addressing a church as much 'at home' in the United States as it was in the universal church. If there had been times when the relationship between Rome and the American church had undergone great strain, the relationship between the Catholic community and wider American society had been equally contentious. May spoke of a sense of being at home in Rome. Ecclesial etiquette demanded no less. What is less predictable is the sense of the church being at home within America.

In both contexts, ecclesial and national, the American Catholic church, at least in the words of its bishops, can be seen engaging in dialogue with a new sense of confidence. Being at home seemed to bring with it a fresh sense of independence and initiative. The Catholic church which we see reflected in the words of its bishops can be said to offer a new and more vital understanding of what it means to be Catholic and American, an understanding which is revealed in and was advanced by the preparation of the Pastoral Letter in 1983, one which allows us to see in the Catholic church of the 1980's the fulfilment of the hope in the 1790's of a 'church come of age'. Moreover, we will hope to see that in its new 'adulthood' the church was free within American culture to move from a simple affirmation of the American way to a critical, reflective position within American society, offering a contribution to what John Courtney Murray had called the 'American proposition'. The bishops' engagement in the nuclear arms issue as it took shape in their 1983 Pastoral revealed, at least in this regard, a church whose commitment to America now took a very different shape from the 'Catholic nationalism' which had for so long been a determining characteristic.

It was on November 6th 1789 that Pope Pius VI issued the apostolic bull Ex Haec Apostolicae which established the independent life of the Catholic community in the United States. Some thirteen years after the American Revolution, Rome established the Diocese of Baltimore and appointed John Carroll as its first bishop. The new bishop, whose pastoral oversight encompassed all of the United States, was appointed out of pastoral solicitude for those in the new American state who were 'united in communion with the chair of Peter, in which the centre of Catholic unity is fixed.'(69) Some two years later the new bishop issued a pastoral letter. Predictably he commended the familiar patterns of church life, worship and prayer, but he also wrote of the wider extension of the life of the church whose aim was 'the preservation and extension of faith...the sanctification of souls...[and the] increase of true religion, for the benefit of our common country, whose welfare depends on the morals of its citizens.'(70)

Two centuries later, Archbishop John May, addressing his brother bishops in Baltimore recalled that time. May saw in Carroll's appointment a recognition by the then Pope that 'the church had come of age' and, reflecting on the intervening time, judged that 'neither the Holy Father nor John Carroll imagined the marvellous and nearly miraculous growth that would occur in the fledgling Catholic community on these shores.'(71)

Alongside the numerical growth which the church had experienced he singled out the experience of collegial activity which stretched back to 1810 when John Carroll met with the bishops of the newly-created dioceses of Boston, Philadelphia and Bardstown to discuss joint concerns and policies. The guiding principle of that collegial activity, he suggested, was one of dialogue and a sought-for spirit of consensus:

'Where the issue is policy, not doctrine, we are committed to working things out by discussion and consensus. The genius of the American way is that everyone's voice is heard - and, where possible, accommodated. So it is in this fashion - by listening to one another, and to the people as well - that we craft documents and hammer out decisions which will speak to our church and to our country. In operating this way, we remain faithful to our traditions. John Carroll, for example, while never waffling on matters of faith, felt that the manner of presenting Catholicism in the United States had to be adapted to a land which had been founded on the principles of religious liberty and democracy...[by adopting] a process which blends our role as moral teachers and our respect for our country's democratic traditions we are able to present the teachings of the church as applied to the present day.'(72)

Celebrating the bicentennial gave the American bishops an opportunity to affirm the continuities of the Catholic experience in the United States, and to record the history of growth and expansion which the church had known. In doing so they also revealed the primary concerns of the contemporary church as its bishops perceive them.

The fundamental question which animates this section is a simple one. What changed reality in the long-established debate about Catholic American identity gave rise to the bishops' teaching initiative in the 1983 Pastoral? It was a document which broke

new ground, one which, to adopt an image congenial to its culture, was pioneering. It revealed a new way of perceiving the place of the Catholic church in American society, and suggested a role which moved beyond the pattern which had been established in the preceding two centuries of its independent life.

Archbishop May's image of a church 'at home' could have been employed in the 1950's, but it would have enjoyed a very different significance. It would have suggested a church community which had been one of the major contributors to the American 'melting-pot', an effective agent of ethnic amalgamation and the development of an authentic American personality. It would have suggested a church marked by a deep sense of loyalty to the external policy goals of the nation, a loyalty such that it was characterized as 'Catholic nationalism' and regarded as an unbroken tradition. It would have suggested a church whose social composition demonstrated the social mobility and educational advancement which seemed the very embodiment of the American dream. In short, it would have suggested a church poised to become a major contributor to the fashioning of America, but which had been domesticated, an uncritical promoter of American values and public policy.

By the 1980's the image 'at home' expressed a different reality. The church had become a fashioner of America but in a surprising direction. It did indeed seem that the church now at last reflected in its inner dynamic the 'American way'. For the first time, the central motifs of democracy and freedom were being tested out within the church itself, not simply as the product of dissident voices but as the authentic expression of post-conciliar Catholicism. Freedom of theological expression, freedom to participate fully in the political arena, the freedom of the Catholic population to dissent vocally and confidently from explicit papal teaching on such sensitive issues as birth control, all were realities within the American Catholic community and simultaneously, objects of Roman disapproval. If the church of the 1950's seemed domesticated, in the 1980's it

seemed to have retained a persistent feral streak which caused alarm both in Rome and in Washington.

Moreover, if the church seemed to reflect certain of the general characteristics of American society, it emerged as a social actor prepared to offer challenge to that same society. It now engaged in criticism of U.S. foreign policy goals and the economic assumptions of the Reagan administration in a manner previously unimaginable. Being 'at home' in the United States seemed to have liberated the church, freeing it for a teaching role in relation to the whole of American society it had not previously exercised.

Important transitions were at work in the period between 1960 and 1983. Those transitions were signaled by emblematic events: the election of John F Kennedy as President, the experience of the Vietnam War, the furore over Humanae Vitae. They led to the emergence of a Church equipped and eager to contribute to American society in a new way. Before we turn to the nature of that contribution we will examine the 'emblematic' events, and see how they signify the changed reality that is the contemporary American Catholic church.

THE NEW MOMENT II

A church poised for breakthrough

There are variant ways of reading the nature of the term, the 'new moment'. As we shall see later, for some commentators it represents a moment of failure, the abandonment by the hierarchy of the church of a tried and durable tradition of reflection on public issues in favour of an impoverished, even sectarian position. For others it is a way of describing that nexus of transitions which provided the context for the bishops' engagement in forming a community of conscience in the public debate on war and peace. The real failure would have been a reluctance to recognize the culture-forming task which fell to the church, accompanied by a fastidious disinclination to embrace the risks and opportunities that task provided. At this point it will simply be suggested that there are a number of factors which underpin the legitimacy of the 'new moment' as a way of describing the church in which the Pastoral was formed.

The chief condition was established before the Vatican Council, indeed before that other great touchstone, the election of John Kennedy. It was the result primarily of the social changes experienced by the American Catholic community, rather than of theological reflection. In his classic study Herberg suggested that by the mid-1950's

'American Catholicism has successfully negotiated the transition from a foreign church to an American religious community. It is now part of the American Way of Life.'(73)

Herberg identified the marks of that transition. There had been a successful ethnic amalgamation the result of which was that Catholics of very diverse ethnic origin had been transformed into 'American Catholics'. Moreover this new American Catholicism included an important middle-class. The ethnic amalgamation of which Herberg speaks had been accomplished by the social agency of the church, for it had acted as 'one of the three great 'melting-pots' or population 'pools' into which America was divided. The innumerable ethnic elements which had made up the immigrant church of the nineteenth and early twentieth century

were gradually undergoing a process of amalgamation issuing in a new type of American Catholic. The diverse pattern of Catholic life and worship, Irish, Italian, Hungarian, Croatian, German, French, continued to colour the life of the church, but there had now emerged a distinctively American pattern. Although for some the dissolution of the 'national' groups was a sign of potential weakness for the church, an erosion of its distinctiveness, Herberg saw on the contrary the emergence of a strong church which had ceased to be foreign, and had become an American institution. As a qualification to this general judgement Herberg identified two groups who were excluded from this amalgam, the Negro Catholics and Latin Americans. Both posed particular challenges to the church, ones which were not so easily assimilable as previous immigrant groups had proved.

These apart there had developed a changed attitude to wider American society, one that Herberg described as 'openness':

'...its openness to the outside world is reflected in the fact that today it speaks to, and is heard by, the entire nation, and not merely its own community...the Catholic Church is recognized as a genuinely American religious community, speaking to the American people not in terms of a unique treasure of revelation entrusted to it alone but in terms of those 'ideals and values' which the American feels is at the bottom of all religion. It is because it has become one of the three great 'religions of democracy', and not because of its claim to speak as the Universal Church, that American Catholicism is today listened to with such respect and attention by the American people.'(74)

It was the altered status of Catholics in American society, the social context of the church, which provided the seed-ground for the new moment. Without the social change which Herberg described, the Second Vatican Council as an ecclesial event could not have been such a dynamic motor of a changed view of church and world. If social change in some way laid the ground for the Council, so continued social change affected its reception. This view of the social base of change within the church is promoted by Andrew Greeley in his American Catholics Since the Council:

'The years since the end of the Second Vatican Council have been marked by profound and accelerating economic and occupational changes among American Catholics, changes so

massive and so sweeping that no serious reflection on the condition of American Catholics can afford to forget even for a moment that the religious change related to the Second Vatican Council came at the same time that economic and occupational changes were sweeping American Catholics ahead of white Protestants' economic achievement.'(75)

There are three areas in which significant movement occurred within the Catholic community in the period from 1960 to 1983, each focused on a particular event. In the political arena the election of John Kennedy as the first Catholic President of the United States was hailed as a breakthrough for the Catholic community. It focuses for us the wider question of Catholic participation in the political debate. In the ecclesial arena the Second Vatican Council saw the emergence of a church whose language and address to the world were in marked contrast to what had gone before. In the United States the postconciliar church had a painful birth as new patterns of loyalty, of 'being Catholic' emerged. In the social arena the domestic effect of America's war in south-east Asia saw a radicalization of parts of the Christian community, in relation to foreign policy goals and attitudes towards war and peace, which failed to find in the official organs of the church an adequate response. In highlighting these three areas of change we will seek to show ways in which those changes illuminate that pattern of American Catholicism which provided the context for The Challenge of Peace.

a. The Election of President Kennedy:
A 'new moment' for Catholics
in Political Life?

Electing the first Catholic President in the history of the United States had a strong emblematic significance. If Kennedy's election had, and continues to have, the power to cast a spell over the American imagination as inaugurating a new age in politics, a spell only enhanced by the President's assassination, his election also seemed to signify a new age for the Catholic community. It seemed to stand in stark contrast to the bitter

failure of Al Smith's candidacy in 1928.(76) Did it indeed mark the political emancipation of American Catholics, not only providing a political success for an individual Catholic, but having an effect on the whole Catholic community, freeing the church itself for a more vigorous role in the nation's life? Ellis suggests that it did have such an enhancing effect:

'Regardless of the slender plurality of votes, Kennedy's election marked a singular triumph. The choice for the first time of a Catholic for President was the kind of event after which issues closely related to it would never be the same again.'(77)

There are two qualifications to this overall judgement which must be acknowledged.

First, in terms of votes cast the margin of his victory was narrow. Ellis quotes the analysis of the voting figures by political scientists at Michigan University which demonstrates that no short term force had moved so large a portion of the 1960 electorate as the issue posed by a Catholic candidate. Indeed it could be argued that Kennedy was elected despite his Catholicism as much as because of it. The negative effect was not only caused by a residual, unreflective prejudice against Catholics, but was the outcome of the great unfinished question for America, whether a Catholic religious commitment was compatible with traditional American perception of the relations between church and state. Ellis regards the issue as resolved by the Vatican Council's Declaration on Religious Freedom, which ended the intellectual debate as to the compatibility of Catholic belonging and the nation's traditions.(78) While that was awaited Kennedy's election seemed to break the mould.(79)

Secondly, how Catholic was Kennedy's candidacy? Weigel is surely right to suggest there is no evidence that Kennedy was motivated by, or even interested in, Catholic social theory, and that his Catholicism like his ethnic origin was an inherited attribute.(80) Thus the facts that he was a white, ethnic Irish Bostonian can be seen as at least as significant as his Catholic faith.

Emblematic events do not, however, depend on truth for their power but simply on their ability to express what is perceived to be true. There is such an emblematic force in Kennedy's election, a force which Ellis, writing close to the event, reflects.

Did the Kennedy presidency presage a new level of engagement by Catholics in the political process, either by lending legitimacy to an existing trend or by demonstrating new possibilities? One of those new possibilities was the popular election of Catholic clergy and religious to positions of political significance. The most celebrated of these was the election of the Jesuit Fr. Drinan to Congress in 1970, followed by that of Fr. Cornell in 1974 and that of Sister Clare Dunn to the Arizona State Legislature in the same year. Kolbenschlag in her examination of this phenomenon sees it as another piece of clear evidence of the coming-of-age of the Catholic community:

'...they were simply the most visible exemplars of an implicit tradition of 'vocational democracy' that had finally impacted on the Catholic 'minority'. They represented, ten years after the Kennedy presidency...the visible affirmation of the American conviction - enshrined in the Constitution - that in no way should one's commitment to the Church, at whatever level, be an obstacle to fullest participation in the body politic...' (81)

This development had an impact, both for American political culture and for the church, and served as a sign of their mutual maturity:

'...[the] phenomenon of American sisters and priests serving in public offices might perhaps be seen as one aspect of the coming-of-age of the United States Church: no longer marked by Jeffersonian reticence and 'political celibacy', nor by the defensive, self-conscious immigrant status, but a church rising to its full stature as an articulate, pragmatic and pluralistic manifestation of the Catholic tradition incarnated in a distinctly American milieu...' (82)

Yet there was an anomaly here. It proved difficult to surrender that traditional aloofness which had marked the Catholic clergy out in their pereceived relation to politics. The conflict came not with the voters but with the Church authorities, who saw this

transition-point as unwelcome, threatening the distinctively lay preserve of engagement in political life, and which was resolved by pressing, successfully, for Drinan's resignation.(83) The transition was resisted by the ecclesiastical rather than political culture. That resistance, moreover, cannot be simply dismissed as a conservative reaction. Certainly, those who viewed the church as a community with a transcendent purpose were troubled by the presence of 'official' Catholics in the political process. But it also troubled those who saw the role of the church in prophetic terms, for they saw here the risk that those who in their vocation reminded the church of its primarily prophetic call could be coopted and tamed by the very powers their principle objective was to critique.(84)

In any event, this was a rather exotic phenomenon. More significant was the character of Catholic political culture in general.

Mary Hanna's researches conducted in the early 1970's suggest that as Catholics have progressed socio-economically, they have become more active participators at high levels of influence within the political community.(85) By 1986, Catholics were in a majority within the House of Representatives, and among other important posts, held the Speakership. Of the 122 Catholic House members, some three-quarters were Democrats. In the Senate, Catholics formed the second largest religious group, although they held comparatively few key positions because of their low seniority.

'Ideologically, Senate Catholics were similar to House Catholics in that Catholic Republicans were slightly less conservative...than fellow non-Catholics, and Catholic Democrats were more liberal than their fellows. The data are what one would expect of a religious group on its way up in society.'(86)

What does this mean for the Catholic voice in American politics? Hanna argues that the growth of Catholic representation at national level does not necessarily bring in its train increased Catholic influence. She shows that Catholics have enjoyed

success as lobbyists on institutional questions, pressing for concrete benefits, but have been markedly less successful on major culture-forming issues such as abortion or social justice. This reflects the strength of American governmental institutions which are inimical to interest group activity on questions which affect values of American society in general. Thus, Catholic influence on government does not mirror the apparent strength of Catholic representation, while, as with John Kennedy, the 'Catholicness' of the politician does not guarantee a specifically 'Catholic' voice in office.

If it is in the main unconvincing to speak of a Catholic political caucus on broad political questions, is it possible to speak of the political colour of the Catholic community out of which such a 'voice' emerges? The researches of Hanna and Andrew Greeley permit some broad characterizing of the politics of the Catholic community.

In characterizing the political leanings of the laity Greeley contests the view that Catholics are more 'conservative' than other Americans, or that new-found prosperity and status inevitably lead to a growing disengagement with the Democratic party. He attacks the 'myth of the conservative, blue collar hard hat hawkish chauvinist Catholic ethnic', and sees the American Catholic as somewhere in the middle of the political stream, less radical than blacks and Jews, but more liberal than white American Protestants.(87)

Nor is this relative radicalism a post-conciliar motif. Greeley suggests that research on the race issue demonstrates that American Catholics moved more quickly towards a pro-integration stance than comparable groups, that they became more disenchanted more quickly with the war in Vietnam and later gave greater support to the nuclear freeze initiative.

Hanna's analysis suggests that there is an observable continuity in the response to major social and political issues among 'White Catholics of European Descent'. A residual loyalty to the

Democratic Party, a continuing economic liberalism and an openness to civil liberties are constants within this part of the Catholic community. Even when the fast growing Hispanic Catholic community is included, there is, she argues, a common political interest which transcends the heterogeneous ethnic background.(88)

What provisional way of characterizing the political complexion of the Catholic community as it bears on the Bishops' Pastoral does this suggest?

Greeley suggests that the bishops' teaching is in harmony with the overall socio-political character of the community they serve. Thus,

'The Bishop's [sic] Pastoral was, appropriately perhaps, preaching to those who were already on their side...There are still a great many Catholics who are conservative on political issues, anti-integrationist on racial issues and 'hawkish' on military issues, but there are also many, many Catholics who are liberal on political issues and pro-integrationist. Moreover, the latter group is larger than the former. Through the years since the Second Vatican Council and the economic breakthrough of the American Catholic population, the latter group has grown larger, not smaller. Those who wish to preach to American Catholics on political or racial matters misread their audience if they believe they are lecturing a population which is overwhelmingly hostile...'(89)

John Kennedy's election seemed to indicate a Catholic breakthrough into national politics at the highest level. That view can be supported by the growth of Catholic representation in Congress and Senate in the twenty-five years after his election. This view is subject to three qualifications. First, the existence of Catholics in places of political power does not mean that this leads irresistably to the existence of a self-conscious Catholic caucus. Although the Democratic Party continues to be the natural home for politically active American Catholics there is no sense in which it can be regarded as a vehicle for Catholic opinion. The model offered by Catholic political parties in Europe finds no parallel in the United States. Secondly, the enhanced presence of Catholics in power tells more of the inner dynamic of Catholicism, notably the growth of an upwardly mobile

middle class than it does necessarily about voters' perceptions. Thirdly, the broad political sympathy of the Catholic American was fertile ground for the new teaching style of the bishops. It at once helped provide the demand for such teaching and provided a ready and attentive audience. How this last came about leads us to the second feature of the post-Kennedy era.

b. The Second Vatican Council:

The 'new moment' for
the Catholic community

The second feature of this phase, one which can hardly be overestimated in the complex implications it had for the American Catholic community, was the Second Vatican Council. We will return later to some of the theological and ecclesiological implications of the Council's texts as they bear on the preparation of the 1983 Pastoral. Here it will be sufficient to indicate some of the features of the Council as it coloured the experience of American Catholics.

The Council can be seen to have had important implications for the way in which belonging to the church was experienced. It might have seemed that those implications would have been felt first by those who attended the Council. For the bishops of the American church, now 246 compared to the 49 who had attended the First Vatican Council, there was the experience of sharing in the *aggiornamento* launched by Pope John, what later became popularly known as 'affective collegiality'. Yet, whatever the individual implications of this, the American hierarchy might well have merited the sobriquet 'The Church of Silence' they earned in the first two sessions of the Council. Their contribution was muted and conservative. Ellis writes:

'While undoubtedly there were genuine gains for the American representatives because of their extended stay in the Eternal City between October, 1962 and December, 1965, their conciliar interventions, as well as their post-conciliar pronouncements and programs, with a few notable exceptions demonstrated little of a truly original and innovative nature.' (90)

The issues which drew most attention from the American contingent were those of ecumenism and religious freedom, the draft schema of the latter being principally the work of John Courtney Murray whom Cardinal Spellman of New York had been instrumental in naming as a peritus. Murray's personal contribution, the articulation of the way in which American experience demonstrated the compatibility of traditions of religious liberty with Catholic teaching as these were reflected on in the Declaration



on Religious Freedom, is all the more remarkable in the light of the official disfavour he laboured under in the 1950's.

This apart, the impact of the Council as it was felt at the domestic level was more immediately related to the changes in liturgy and the attendant use of the vernacular. Fogarty writes: 'What had seemed so absolute and unchangeable, so timeless and ahistorical, what had previously set Catholics apart from other Americans and yet united them among themselves, now became the symbol of a Church immersed in human history and change.' (91)

In this context, there are characteristics of the post-conciliar American church which have a direct bearing on the way in which the 1983 Pastoral was prepared and received, not all of which are the direct result of the Council. The facts of social change promoted an independence of mind among articulate Catholics which first expressed itself in relation to the church's teaching on birth control. After the failure of the papal encyclical Humanae Vitae to win the obedient response of many American Catholics, the way in which all teaching was received was changed irreversibly. The authority of a teaching document increasingly came to rest more on its inner argument, and its coherence with the lived experience of the faithful than in its authorship. Thus, for many Catholics, the American church's teaching on matters of peace won respect, a response which indicated the way in which the church's teaching task would have to be carried out if it were to meet with response from a laity not willing to be extruded from the worshipping community on the basis of what it regarded as flawed teaching. The era of the loyal yet independent-minded lay Catholic had arrived.

It could be argued that the reception given the papal encyclical on birth control was one of the first tests of the reality of the postconciliar church. The widespread rejection of the encyclical in the United States by both laity and clergy gave rise to a crisis not only in the field of sexual ethics, but in the way in which Catholics viewed the teaching organs of the church as they bore upon questions of personal morality. Andrew Greeley writes:

'The most obvious serious problem for American Catholicism in the years after the Vatican Council is the decline of support for certain components of its sexual ethic among large numbers of American Catholics...only about a tenth of American Catholics accept some of the more controversial components of the church's sexual ethic.'(92)

Because the church had invested both its prestige and its authority in promoting compliance with its sexual teaching, there is here a crisis of authority as well as of credibility. In matters of birth control, divorce and premarital sexuality, there has been, Greeley concludes, a drastic decline in the acceptance of official teaching. The mere repetition of the official teaching, even when it was reaffirmed during papal visits has had no observable impact. Thus,

'it would appear that American Catholics in overwhelming numbers have decided to reject not only the church's position that sexual pleasures may not be divorced from procreation, but also the church's insistence that sexual pleasure may not be divorced from the married state.'(93)

The implication of this degree of dissent is a changed perception of what it means to be Catholic, rather than the carrying of dissent into alienation from the church. Thus,

'American Catholics are not engaging in actions which they take to be sinful [contraception and premarital sex] and defying the church by sinning against the church's commands. Rather they are saying that the institutional church is wrong about such matters.'(94)

There is for them no conflict between being good Catholics and rejecting this teaching.

Is this a result of the Council? Greeley reminds us that the fact that a change has occurred since the end of the Vatican Council does not mean that the Council has caused the change.(95) Rather, increased educational and economic achievement would have fostered such independence, aside from the Council's vision of the church, and the Council is best seen as a 'facilitating cause' of what would have occurred in any event.(96)

In their survey of American Catholics carried out in the mid-1980's William D'Antonio and his fellow-researchers likewise conclude that the new 'autonomy' of the laity is the result of

the impact of social change, and principally of increased educational opportunities, rather than changes within the institutional church. Such autonomy is reflected in the belief of an increasing number of Catholics that the decisions they make on moral matters should be based on empirical information, even if this leads in a contrary direction to traditional values espoused by traditional sources of authority. D'Antonio captures the impact of this new autonomy on the power-structures of the church by suggesting that 'pray, pay and obey' no longer describes the lay Catholic in the United States.(97)

The emergence of a lay voice which, at least in parts, is marked by a position of dissent from official teaching carries implications for the authority of the institution. Is the teaching authority, either at papal or episcopal level, simply impotent if it is unable to command the assent of most laity and most clergy and to prevent those who dissent from considering themselves to be devout Catholics? The change does carry that danger if the teaching organs of the church continue to address the faithful as if the older pattern of assent was still in operation. It is not so much that the laity do not listen to what the authoritative teachers say, but that they set a higher value on their own reception of that teaching, and scrutinize it for its coherence and inner truth. Sometimes the laity listen very carefully, but in ways which may be better described as giving considered agreement rather than automatic assent. Greeley instances the debate surrounding the 1983 Pastoral.(98)

In the winter of 1982-1983, before the release of the final document, 34% of American Catholics and 34% of Protestants thought too much money was spent on arms and defense. A year later the number of Protestants remained the same, but the Catholic opposition had risen by 20 percentage points, a change of mind equivalent to 10 million Catholics.

'Devoid of credibility in sexual ethics, the American hierarchy turns out to have enormous credibility on matters of nuclear policy, probably more than they themselves thought they possessed and certainly more than most outside observers would have anticipated. In fact, it may well be said that the

effective leadership of the American bishops on the nuclear weapons question represents a power and an influence of leadership which does not seem to be matched anywhere in the world.'(99)

It is the combination of an already existing disposition on the nuclear question, the process which the bishops followed in this last most public phase of the Pastoral's preparation, and the quality of the argument in the document itself which can be seen at work in this formation of a Catholic reaction.

In accounting for this, Greeley offers a picture of the transformation of the church from an immigrant to professional middle class community. His characterization of the church excludes the extremely significant Hispanic community which carries significance for future projections, but his picture is revealing if set alongside that which Dolan offered for the 'booster Catholicism' of the 1950's.

'Parish priests facing a typical Catholic congregation on Sunday must realize that they now are preaching to a group which is, or is about to become, with the exception of the Jews, the most affluent denominational group in American society.'(100)

There has been an 'enormous transformation' in the Catholic community from immigrant to professional middle-class, a process whose pace continues. The emergence of a well-educated and independent laity inevitably leads to friction and conflict with the church. Yet defection rates suggest that they remain within the church:

'...those Church leaders who might in some of their darker moments wish that they could get rid of the contentious, opinionated, independent, professional class Catholics who are now typical, are wasting their time. The well-educated Catholic professional is here...and not about to leave the church. But not about to participate in the church on any other terms but his or her own.'(101)

c. Vietnam: The 'new moment'
for Catholic Nationalism

If the debate over the encyclical 'Humanae Vitae' exposed the new social reality of the post-conciliar church, the third feature of this period was the traumatic impact of America's war in Vietnam, a trauma which affected all of American society and continues to be a neuralgic condition.

What was distinctive about the Catholic experience? If the debate over methods of birth control showed the energy and independence of a newly-confident laity, the debate over America's conduct of the war in south-east Asia exposed the leadership of the Church as uncertain and halting in its reaction, but finally breaking with the Catholic Nationalist tradition. O'Neill in his study concludes that the institutional church, even as its life was being radicalized at the Council, was ill-prepared to deal with the complexities of the debate.(102) Yet, however painfully slow the process, the hierarchy's eventual criticism of the Administration's policy marked the end of a long tradition of continuous support by the organs of the church for the foreign policy goals of the government.

O'Neill suggests that within an established pattern of promoting the fundamental compatibility of Catholicism with the American way of life the bishops had fostered a complacent attitude to foreign policy.

'[It] was presumed to be a benevolent defence of the 'free World' against communism, and this blanket conception lulled the inattentive to accept this justification for any and all American actions in the rest of the world.'(103)

Dorothy Dohen who has documented the phenomenon of Catholic nationalism offers a number of factors which bore on the hierarchy, and which promoted this tradition.(104) Together they help explain the difficulty the bishops encountered in moving from a tradition of automatic support for national foreign policy goals to a position of opposition.

There was first a predominance within the hierarchy itself of what she identifies as an 'Irish' caucus which was utterly committed to the fusion of religion and national feeling.(105) Only as the make-up of the hierarchy changed with the appointment of new bishops did that Irish dominance and its attendant culture change. Secondly, the fear of a recurrence of anti-Catholic sentiment, which had been a feature of the early 1950's, made the bishops nervous of anything other than espousing total allegiance to the nation's goals as determined by the Administration. Thirdly, committed to a view of the church which set great store by public unity the bishops feared any move which could unleash disintegration. Finally, the long-established ardent tradition of opposition to communism made the Vietnam war particularly difficult to challenge. Taken together, these factors made the hierarchy, both by instinct and judgement, reluctant to move towards any criticism of the conduct of the war in south-east Asia, a reluctance only strengthened by the criticism being voiced elsewhere in the Catholic community.

For there was a discernible movement in the overall Catholic reaction to American involvement in south-east Asia as the war unfolded. Weigel provides a telling image of that movement as the war was reflected upon in Catholic journals.(106) The radicalization of individual Catholics, lay and clerical, is fixed in the public mind by the direct action of the Berrigan brothers and the Catonsville Nine. Building on the pacifist witness of the long-established Catholic peace movement represented by the Catholic Worker movement, and the lobbying activity of the American chapter of PAX, founded in 1962, many young Catholics moved beyond lobbying to direct action. Initially, the Catholic Peace Fellowship, formed around the Berrigan brothers and Catholic Workers, focused on supporting Catholic conscientious objectors. In time they embraced direct action at places such as Catonsville. Fogarty further instances Robert Drinan, at that time a law professor, who successfully sought election to the House of Representatives in 1970 as an example of those Catholics who turned to political life to oppose the war and influence American society.(107)

In institutional terms, however, the church moved slowly.

O'Neill bases most of his approach on corporate statements by the bishops, not because they are particularly numerous, but because other indicators of episcopal reaction yield so little.(108)

The disjunction between the hierarchy and vocal parts of the church grew from 1968 onwards as hundreds of young Catholics faced either imprisonment or exile as draft-boards throughout the United States refused their claim to conscientious objector status. In the face of this the bishops sent contradictory signals. On the one hand, the N.C.C.B. issued a letter asking for an end to military conscription and seeking such status for Catholics. On the other, the Conference would not submit the war to analysis in the light of Catholic moral principles and took refuge in exhortation that each citizen should examine the question in the light of conscience. Not only was there here a failure to challenge government policy, there was an even greater failure to exercise a teaching responsibility on a matter of paramount national importance.

The difficulty which the bishops experienced in moving away from an uncomplicated support of government policy can be seen in the slow transition from general support of the Administration's policy at the outset, to the questioning of the means employed in 1968, and to the criticism, albeit ambiguous, of policy by 1971. Thus, in 1968, their Pastoral espoused the validity of selective conscientious objection to a particular war. By November 1971 they had passed a resolution which contained this judgment:

'whatever good we hope to achieve through continued involvement in this war is now outweighed by the destruction of human life and moral values which it inflicts'(109)

It is this transition which Ellis regards as making the decisive break with American Catholicism of the old sort, a break that could not be reversed.(110) It presaged the challenge offered to Administration policy objectives in Central America in 1980, and the fundamental challenge which the Pastoral of 1983 brought to bear on issues of war and peace. Yet the gradualness of the transition in the bishops' attitudes to the Vietnam War tells us

much about the profound difficulty the bishops faced in confronting a break with that tradition of support for the cause of American arms which, it can be argued, stretches from the time of George Washington to Vietnam, and is criticized as 'American Catholic Nationalism.' The strain of the transition accounts for the relative silence of the bishops on the war, particularly in the course of 1969 and 1970, a silence which O'Neill sees as revealing the strains within the hierarchy as it sought to protect episcopal consensus. Nor was the United States Catholic Conference able to embrace a more radical role. Its agencies seem to have been similarly inhibited, caught between the continuing majority Catholic acquiescence in the war, the silence of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the growing number of clerical and lay anti-war voices.(111)

The architect of the old supportive approach is identified by O'Neill as Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia:

'The advent of Cardinal Krol to the presidency of NCCB-USCC enthroned the triumph of acquiescence and 'diplomatic' ambiguity at the pinnacle of the Catholic Church's institutional expression in the nation's capital...the acquiescence and ambiguity continued because of the precedence given to traditional concerns, like parochial schools and abortion, over the issue of war...[The NCCB presidency] was now firmly in the hands of the principal representative of American Catholic 'conservative diplomacy'. He was chiefly interested in the furtherance of internal politics and the institutional prerogative of the Church...and in the general political forum only as his impinged on the latter. Hence the lack of concern with American policy in Vietnam.'(112)

Where then were the roots of change? O'Neill argues that the possibility of moving beyond this cautious criticism lay, rather curiously, in the fact of the N.C.C.B.-U.S.C.C.'s limitedness. It was not a native Vatican, capable of enforcing a uniformity of voice among the members of the hierarchy. The roots of change lay in the emergence of new voices within the hierarchy, or the persistence of those who had been continually outspoken against American policies. The voices of episcopal criticism were raised but at a diocesan level, and failed to be reflected in the public voice of central organs of the American church. Towards the end of the war these latter turned with relief to look ahead to a

more hopeful future for Vietnam and the whole region, still unable to face the reality of American policy.

However cautiously, the hierarchy had broken with the past. As new bishops were appointed, a new American approach took root. If Humanae Vitae demonstrated the possibility of lay Catholic dissent from the magisterium, the trauma of Vietnam forced the possibility of episcopal dissent from the foreign policy goals of the Administration. Unexpectedly, the agony of the series of halting steps which the American hierarchy took, culminating in its 1971 Statement, was itself productive. Hanna's researches in 1973-74 suggest that many leaders saw in this statement, however long overdue, a declaration of independence for the church. It symbolized a sort of liberation. In future, she suggests, church leaders would be more ready to challenge political actions which they believed to be morally wrong. Moreover, this confidence in such matters as abortion would allow the church to move in advance of the public consensus, to move from a reactive to a proactive role.

In this way, what we might call 'classic' Catholic historiography describes the emergence of the 'new moment' which the Catholic community experienced in the years immediately before and after the Council. The product of a social and cultural shift, it gave the church the capacity to exploit its potential to become an actor in the making of America. If in the 1950's that might have been seen in terms of a strong, cohesive institution moving effortlessly into the public arena, then the decade which followed demonstrated the naivety of such a view. The 'new moment' came for a church decisively marked by the ecclesial revolution of the Council. How ready was American political culture to receive it?

THE NEW MOMENT III

Moving to the Centre : Mature Participation in the Political Culture

Our main concern is with the hierarchy, and in the section which follows we will test out some of the claims for the Catholic church by examining the innovative style and content of the preparation of the 1983 Pastoral. The bishops are not the church, however, and there are other indicators of the 'place' of the Catholic community which have been the object of scholarly interest.

One measure of the new opportunity for the Catholic community is the way in which Catholics function as a political interest group. The researches of Mary Hanna, carried out in the early 1970's suggest that, rather than thinking of the Catholic engagement in the political process as a sign of a distinctive Catholic 'moment', it is more accurately seen as part of a wider phenomenon, namely an increased assertiveness of ethnic groups.

'If religion is defined as a group phenomenon, then I believe that, overall, on the basis of this study, American Catholics can be regarded as members of a particular religiously-based ethnic group with a well-developed system of values and strong institutional and communal structures.'(113)

Basing her study on a method of analysis developed by Truman, Hanna offers us a way of determining the church's and any similar group's access to political influence and power. First, she seeks to describe it in terms of its 'strategic position in society'. In line with what has already been suggested about the increased economic and social prestige of the Catholic community, she makes the point that political interest and activity relate closely to that prestige. The evidence of the Kennedy effect is that his election, or rather his influence once elected, was achieved by a partial diminishing of his Catholic identity. Thus, the Catholic 'voice' in politics is the result of increased status, but that does not lead inevitably to a Catholic programmatic approach. The very achieving of such status, perversely, may indicate the diminishing of a narrow ethnic

approach. This has implications for the way the bishops set about the task of contributing to the public debate. The enhanced involvement of Catholics in the political process means that the real impact of distinctive Catholic approaches to decisions will be far greater when these emerge from the constituency level, from the lobbying by an educated laity, than when that approach is restricted to official church statements, even when they are American in origin. The enhanced political status of American Catholics may demand a more active teaching role for the church, one committed to consensus-building and listening, than to a more active lobbying role by the church as institution seeking to exploit that enhanced status.

Secondly, that very diversity within the Catholic community which Neuhaus sees as weakening the impact of the Catholic church need not be a source of failure.(114) The second criterion Hanna develops is that of the group's internal character and cohesiveness. Here the disappearance of the monolithic church might seem to diminish the effectiveness of the church as a political actor. It is suggested that there is a 'hesitancy' among church leaders as they engage with large-scale, political organizations, because there is a fear that promoting a particular approach will expose inner conflicts and divisions. This is seen, for example, in the church's failure to build a broadly-based 'right-to-life' approach.(115) The church is sensitive to the inhibiting fact of inner Catholic pluralism and to the long-felt desire not to pursue a sectarian aim and thus run the risk of arousing conflict in a pluralist society.(116) These factors militate against Catholic interest-group activity. To overcome these disadvantages, the church seeks to disarm its critics by asserting its right to speak by stressing the moral dimension of policy choices and, if necessary, concealing their sectarian dimension.

This is separate from the more familiar task of lobbying on particular issues. Hanna's analysis of the lobbying activity of the U.S.C.C. in 1972 and 1973 demonstrates its breadth of energy and concern.(117) In addition to lobbying on questions of

institutional significance it addressed some twenty-five matters of public interest, mainly on what can be described as social-justice questions. The effectiveness of this activity was enhanced by a careful use of experts and bishops. Thus, those within the Catholic community with particular expertise were made use of while the bishops were deployed, for example, before congressional committees to lend their prestige to the church's advocacy. The manner of this lobbying is seen as encouraging a different way of perceiving leadership within the church, and in this context, the promotion of a leadership which values expertise and is sufficiently expert in the world of political affairs to deploy it wisely.

'The lobbying practice of the USCC, supported by the NCCB, illustrate a reorientation and revitalization of Church leadership which both called forth and is called forth by the post-conciliar concerns with the world and its social problems. Concern for social problems helped to stimulate a new kind of leadership and new concept of leadership. These, in turn, are affecting the development of Church concern over issues and the positions are often in striking variance with the past.'(118)

Thus, the lobbying itself promotes a Catholic voice which is separate from Catholic legislators and the hierarchy. In this it reveals a new pattern of leadership within the Catholic community itself.

What does this suggest for the role of the Catholic bishops as they set about their task in the 1983 Pastoral?

It would imply that the bishops, like the rest of the Catholic community, have moved beyond acting as the articulators of a narrow sectarian view.

That movement, if it is conceived as the product of a maturing community, has both an inhibiting and freeing effect. It suggests that the bishops' best hope in contributing to the public debate is through the education and formation of the Catholic community at large. How that is to be accomplished in a

way which is faithful to the changed contours of that community will emerge as we examine the process.

It implies also that creation of a moral framework for public debate is the most significant task the bishops face. How is that to be done in a way which moves beyond a hortatory and didactic approach, which is seen as long on principle but short on specific targets? Is the Catholic social tradition which we see enunciated by the American bishops to be left on the fringe of the church's and nation's life, or is it able to move into a culture-forming function, and if it can, how does that affect the way in which the teaching instruments are wrought?

THE NEW MOMENT IV

The Culture-forming Task

Before 1965 we were major culture carriers: now we are becoming culture-makers.

Sister Mary Augusta Neale

Is Sister Mary Augusta's comment rhetoric or reality?(119) John Courtney Murray had identified the need for such a 'making' of the culture, and had identified the resources which the tradition could bring to bear. Two decades later some commentators felt the moment might be missed.

'In America there are a number of religious groups that have not had their turn at the culture-forming task. The single largest grouping is the Roman Catholic Church...In many ways, this ought to be 'the Catholic moment' in American life. By virtue of numbers, of a rich tradition of social and political theory, and of Vatican II's theological internalization of the democratic idea, Catholics are uniquely posed to propose the American proposition anew...the Catholic moment was not, as some say, in 1960 when John F Kennedy was elected...the Catholic moment is now. It may be missed, however.'(120)

The task of forming a culture is a wide one. In the passage above Neuhaus expresses the fear that the American Catholic church will abandon the task even before it has begun. Neuhaus, and the seminal work of Robert Bellah,(121) predicate their evaluation of contemporary Catholicism on a crisis in American political culture pictured in as vivid a way as Murray. The current dynamic of the American Catholic community suggests a tantalizing possibility. The opportunity for the church to become a maker of culture occurs at the precise moment that the church itself is undergoing the final stage of assimilation into that culture.

Conventional wisdom suggests that in the realm of public policy-making two ideas are held in tension. While separation of church and state is not seriously questioned, there is a corresponding belief that society requires a common set of values. Americans have held that the Christian churches of their very nature are required not simply to challenge policy but to participate actively in shaping the policies and institutions

which reflect the ideals of the American people which are themselves seen as rooted in the Christian inheritance. Correspondingly, belief in God, participation in public worship and public life while constituting the task of the church also contribute to the well-being of the nation.

Throughout the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries it was the mainline, Protestant, churches which provided this. Bellah speaks of them as being close to the centre of American culture.(122) This is evidenced by the way in which the religious intellectuals who spoke for the churches also articulated public issues in ways which enjoyed wide currency in society as a whole. This tradition is in disarray, Bellah argues. He identifies the nature of the crisis which has arisen in the recent experience of the church as an intellectual one. Intellectuals emerging from the mainline churches have become isolated from the general culture, and no new voice has emerged to assume the mantle of Niebuhr or Tillich. The implication for the Protestant churches has been that, lacking the leaven of a creative intellectual focus, they have become vulnerable to a quasi-therapeutic blandness, and have been unable to withstand the growth of vigorous forms of radical religious individualism.

The crisis is not restricted in its effect to the church communities. This intellectual vacuum within the mainstream of American Protestant culture is made more insidious by the emergence of what Richard Neuhaus memorably calls the 'naked public square'.(123) He argues that there has been a telling change in recent political discourse in the U.S. Its chief mark is the exclusion of religiously grounded values from public life. This comes about, not because American people are more secular or because of a crisis in faith, but rather because of changes in the conduct and values of the American political elite. Neuhaus instances elites such as those in law, government and education as being increasingly mobilized on a secular basis, resistant to the traditional claim that religious language is appropriate to public discourse and that religious values are fleshed in practical policy options.

This crisis gives added weight to the New Religious Right, although that is not the only response Neuhaus encourages Americans to seek. It is in short a crisis which goes beyond the church. The emergence of the 'naked public square' is itself a threat to the true representativeness of public institutions, as advocates of too broad an interpretation of the separation of church and state deny the fundamental nature of the American people which is a religious one.

For both Neuhaus and Bellah the contemporary Catholic church is well placed to redress the balance, and restore propriety to the public square. Bellah identifies the experience of Vatican II as the critical event which generated a much more active participation by the Catholic church in national life. It had enjoyed influence before, but its energy had been devoted to an inner agenda. Its primary concern had been one of institution-building and self-help. Now, as the result of social change, the Catholic church had moved toward the centre of American life, and one indicator of that role is the 1983 Pastoral.⁽¹²⁴⁾ It is not clear whether this indicates that the vacuum created by the intellectual failure of the Protestant tradition has been filled by a Catholic church changed by a new social dynamic, or whether the intellectual contribution of, say, John Courtney Murray was the source of motive power towards a place of influence and cultural formation. However achieved, this amounts to the moment of opportunity for the Catholic community.

What is the precise nature of the place which is available to the Catholic church? If the common good in the culture of the United States is threatened by a radical individualism and by 'managerial manipulation' the Catholic church by virtue of its structures is well-placed to stand over against these threats. William Lee Miller in his The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic argues that in the face of such threats to the common good, the Catholic church presents an affirmation of what he calls the tradition of 'personalist communitarianism'.⁽¹²⁵⁾ This sense of the common good, sensitive to the interconnectedness of human beings in community, can address not only America's

domestic need but also has an impact on her international role. The tradition which Catholicism provides, he suggests, is thereby the basis of a true republic in an interdependent world. Although not the only promoter of such thinking, the Catholic community is

'the largest and intellectually and spiritually most potent institution that is the bearer of such ideas.'(126)

A further feature of the promotion of this vision is related to the style of thinking and presentation of ideas. Most significantly, in the face of secular scepticism and Protestant pietism, the Catholic affirmation of the role of reason can restore reasoned argument in public life. Miller's argument is not that the Catholic tradition, with its characteristics of reason and affirmation of the common good, can simply move into the public arena unchanged. Indeed, he points to the continuing impact upon the Catholic church of the durable American heritage of religious freedom and self-rule. He seems to suggest that the Catholic contribution will be in some sense relative to the Catholic community's appropriation of these parts of the American experience. It is that to which he accords greatest value, for in it he sees the positive potential of American pluralism, what he calls,

'a reciprocating deep pluralism in which several communities learn from each other for the better.'(127)

D'Antonio is in little doubt that the autonomy of lay Catholics in their relationship to their church is analagous to that autonomy which has been the consistent mark of American Protestantism from the outset, and that this autonomy is shaping a church markedly different from that of the recent past. The profile of this emerging church means that it 'looks something like American Protestantism with several denominations'.(128) this does not mean, we might argue, that we can speak of a Protestant impact on Catholic lay perception of the church to which they belong. What it does demonstrate is the emergence of a pluralism within Catholic culture which is parallel to the long-established pluralism within Protestantism or indeed within American Judaism. It is, this would argue, an aspect of the

completion of the assimilation of the Catholic into American society.

There is then a price to pay for making a major contribution to the task of forming the culture, and the pluralism Miller seeks to promote implies shifts of power within the institutional church itself. Paradoxically, those very characteristics of the Catholic community which make it a possible promoter of the common good, in particular its strong hierarchical structure, its resistance to individualism and sectarianism are themselves in the process of challenge and adaptation by the church itself. Bellah identifies one of the strongest curbs on the possibility of the new opportunities for the Catholic church in the emergence of fragmentation within the church itself. The tantalizing question arises over how to distinguish between a pluralism which is laudable and a fragmentation which is dangerous.

D'Antonio's survey makes no final judgement on this balance. It is worth recalling that, although pluralism may be a consequence of a new freedom within the institutional life of the church, in one sense the product of a more liberal ecclesial culture, it is not in itself a promoter of liberalism. If the Catholic community is marked by pluralism it gives a vitality to all points of the cultural compass. What has advanced the progressive agenda on issues of peace, economic affairs and women's issues is the promotion of such an approach by a hierarchy which had no proven record of the taking of imaginative initiative. If the character of the hierarchy were to change might other embodiments of the pluralistic church find a voice? It is this very pluralism, the disappearance of the monolithic church, which enhances the cultural influence of the church. It would be a great irony if the church were now to be valued for its pre-conciliar character at the precise moment that the post-conciliar church is becoming an active maker of American culture.

There are two dangers for the contemporary Catholic community which this debate suggests. The first is articulated by D'Antonio:

'Is a return to a nineteenth century anti-modernist, patriarchal autocratic Church organization possible? Can there be a revival of a Church with an overwhelming majority of praying, paying and obeying adherents?'(129)

The answer is probably not. Yet, if the articulation of a broadly progressive line on peace and justice issues is the consequence of a conscientized hierarchy, how vulnerable is that progressive agenda to changes within the hierarchy itself? The real danger may not be a return to old structures, but of a more conservative hierarchy lending authority to those elements within the 'broad church' of the Catholic community which support a more conservative social agenda. Is this the real context of the 'consistent ethic' which Bernardin now seeks to promote, an attempt to rescue the liberal agenda?

This leads to the second danger. Will the Catholic church as it reflects the 'autonomy' long taken for granted by American Protestantism be increasingly conformed to the pattern which Bellah identifies as a radical individualism. If the church leadership proves once more to be more conservative, will radical Catholics find other arenas to further their political and social aims, and what effect will this have on the church? We will return to these questions in the final section.

'PSYCHIATRISTS OR THEOLOGIAN':
the foreign policy debate
in Reagan's America

'...the debate which we Americans tend to carry on is still too much couched in categories that imply that these are final answers, that there is a final goal towards which we are working, called peace, after which tensions presumably disappear. There is too much of a division in our national debate between the psychiatric school of foreign policy, which thinks relations among nations are like relations among people and which emphasises unilateral concessions and gestures of almost personal goodwill, and the theological school of foreign policy, which implies that the only reason the walls of Jericho have not tumbled yet is because the right ideological trumpet has not yet been sounded.'

Henry Kissinger

The final element in the broad American context of the peace pastoral's production was the character of the debate about nuclear war and the conduct of foreign policy after the election of Ronald Reagan to the Presidency of the United States. Reagan's election was accompanied by a heightened public awareness of the critical questions confronting the makers of the nation's strategic policy. This awareness is described by Robert Scott, the research co-ordinator for the Arms Control Association, who had a particular interest in the nuclear arms debate as it was reflected at the level of the citizen's engagement:

The issue of nuclear war has rapidly risen to the forefront of American consciousness in recent years. The first hints of the trend were probably heard on the evening news, where charismatic anchormen smiled and reported about some new nuclear missile, or some new twist in the arms control talks. The situation seemed to grow more significant as Americans learned more, perhaps from a television special, about how many nukes we have, how many the other side has, and how many times over we can be destroyed. Tension mounted as more information came in about destabilizing weapons, the perilous balance of power, and superpower confrontation. Pieces of stories about the end of the world filtered into communities all over the country through the radio, newspapers and magazines. Soon it became clear: the national news media had launched a nuclear attack on the American public. A barrage of words like 'first strike', 'Stealth', 'freeze', and 'MX', rained down on our homes and settled into our vocabulary.' (130)

Scott offered what he called 'an annotated bibliography for the bewildered citizen' to help make sense of the 'nuclear overkill' of published material.

The process of producing The Challenge of Peace led the Bernardin committee from a level of knowledge which was broadly that of the 'bewildered citizen' to a confident engagement with the policy-makers. The pastoral was addressed to the bewildered citizenry of the United States as well as to its political élites. In what follows we will simply sketch that level of awareness which the wider social community had in the early 1980's.

In an editorial in The Month written on the day of Reagan's inauguration Raymond Helmick wrote:

'For anyone concerned with justice, peace, human rights or any dimension of the humanitarian interest, the succession of Mr. Ronald Reagan to the American Presidency must first of all be cause for alarm... The worst that one fears of a Reagan Presidency has to do with the threat of nuclear war...'(131)

The Reagan administration's foreign policy was marked by four constants. (132) It espoused an ardent anti-communism which was particularly expressed by the President in an address to a West Point audience when he spoke of the Soviet Union as an 'evil force' and in similar vein when he described it as 'the focus of evil in the modern world... an evil empire'. Secondly the administration developed a distinction first made by Jeane Kirkpatrick between 'authoritarian' governments, such as that in South Africa, and 'totalitarian' régimes, such as that in the Soviet Union. This neat formula allowed for the support of right-wing autocracies and implacable opposition to left-wing régimes. Thirdly, Reagan was elected having pledged to rearm the United States, including a promised nuclear build-up. Fourthly, United States policies were increasingly defined in military terms. These concerns came to form what was called the Reagan Doctrine, a foreign policy which demanded new, expensive military power. It was best defined in the 1985 State of the Union address:

'Freedom is not the sole prerogative of a chosen few: it is the universal right of all God's children... [Peace and prosperity flourish] where people live by laws that ensure free press, free speech, and freedom to worship, vote and create wealth. Our mission is to nourish and defend freedom and democracy, and to communicate these ideals everywhere we can...support for freedom-fighters is self-defense.'(133)

The particular targets of the Reagan Doctrine were Angola, Afghanistan, Kampuchea, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

What were the paramount features of the policy debate in American public discussions in the early years of the Reagan administration? What concerns were uppermost in the mind of the 'bewildered citizen'? (134)

The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 had cast a chill over Soviet-American relations. The SALT II treaty was already in trouble with the Senate. The Soviet invasion destroyed any hope of ratification. With the ratification of SALT suspended, the Soviet refusal to engage in INF negotiations immediately after NATO's announcement of its dual-track decision, and concern about the implications of the Afghan invasion for the Persian Gulf, there was a complete standstill on all arms control negotiations in 1980 until the visit of Chancellor Schmidt to Moscow in July. In October 1980 preliminary consultative talks on INF began.

During the election campaign the following month Carter and Reagan clashed over SALT II, and with the latter's election its demise was certain.

Opposition to the SALT agreement had centred on a number of questions. Among them was the argument tht the Backfire bomber was indeed a strategic nuclear system: that nothing was being done to offset the Soviet advantage in 'heavy' missiles: that the limits on Cruise missiles were too restrictive: that verification was inadequate: and that the SALT process had done nothing to halt the Soviet military build-up and in effect had institutionalized American strategic inferiority.

The failure of the SALT ratification process, after seven years of negotiations and intense consultations with the Allies, was felt particularly in Europe. Such concerns were reinforced by the perception that arms control was not a high priority for the new Administration. There was a long delay in the appointment of leading officials to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and after they were made, it was clear that nothing would occur until a planned review of strategic planning had occurred. It appeared that the Reagan administration was interested in modernising NATO's longer-range intermediate nuclear forces but not in negotiating reductions.

Nevertheless, perhaps influenced by the strong opposition to nuclear weapons in Europe, the Reagan administration took the initiative on INF, and in his first major foreign policy speech in November 1981 the President announced several arms control objectives, among them the 'zero option'. This was followed in June 1982 by the planned commencement of the START talks. As we saw earlier, throughout 1982 there was growing public concern about the unrestrained proliferation of nuclear weapons and the possibility of a new round in the nuclear arms race. These concerns found a vehicle in the freeze movement, given a high profile by the Kennedy-Hatfield Resolution in March.

Nuclear freeze proponents argued that there was an essential parity in strategic weapons, that talk of a 'window of vulnerability' was a fabrication, and that 'war-fighting' and all counterforce capabilities were inherently destabilizing. Given essential strategic parity it was in both Soviet and American interests to achieve reductions in strategic systems following the adoption of a freeze.

The freeze's opponents claimed that it would undermine the dual-track nature of the NATO LRNTF decision. The Kennedy-Hatfield Resolution was defeated in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in June 1982 and a similar initiative in the House was defeated in August.

The replacement of Secretary of State Haig by George Schultz promised a greater sureness of touch within the Administration which was fissured by internecine conflicts. European perception of the Administration suffered a set-back as a result of the so-called 'walk-in-the-woods' understanding of January 1983, the consequent personnel changes within A.C.D.A. and especially the replacement of A.C.D.A. Director Eugene Rostow by the less-experienced Kenneth Adleman.

Thus, at the moment when the second draft of the peace pastoral was being exposed to public scrutiny, and its responses to U.S. strategic policy widely publicised, there was unease about the Reagan administration's success. John Langan (135) suggests that the rearmament programme of the Administration was the least controversial part of its programme in terms of the Washington community. It ran into trouble because of the size of the federal budget deficit and the failure of the promised surge of economic growth. These economic problems were compounded by the technical problems involved in any new weapons system, and military doubts about the actual usefulness and vulnerability of certain weapons systems:

'All these difficulties have emerged to cloud over the radiant honeymoon of America's military-industrial complex with an administration that was about to descend with a shower of gold and goodwill...The rearmament programme, especially the part calling for modernization and extension of America's strategic and tactical nuclear forces, has also run into serious moral criticism both in Western Europe and at home...The disarmament proposals do at least show that the Reagan administration understands that even if arms are necessary they are not sufficient for the successful conduct of foreign policy. The rearmament programme and the effort to close the celebrated 'window of vulnerability' are a comparatively long-term project. For the time being they have receded from the centre of Washington's consciousness.' (136)

Lawrence Freedman identifies two underlying matters of debate at that time. The first concerned the quality of NATO doctrine and in particular the balance between conventional and nuclear forces and the role of arms control. The second was more political, and touched on the fundamental question of European security

arrangments, which raised the issue of the proper relationship between the United States and Western Europe. The most significant impact of the planned deployment by NATO of Pershing II and Cruise missiles was the way in which it generated public debate. That debate within Europe was demanded by the mass peace movement. What was the shape of the public debate in the United States?

George Carslake Thompson had written in 1886:

'It must be remembered that 'public opinion', 'the will of the nation', and phrases of that kind are really nothing but metaphors, for thought and will are attributes of a single mind, and 'the public' or 'the nation' are aggregates of many minds.' (137)

The task of defining the role of public opinion as it affects policy is complicated. Ralph Levering (138) identifies two models of that role, that of manipulation in which a President can control public opinion to his advantage, and that of constraint in which public opinion can at best limit official policy. As in so much else, the Vietnam experience brought about change in this regard. Public confidence in foreign policy experts was eroded, and the public's willingness to respond to an argument based on 'national security' diminished.

Apart from the impact of specific events, Levering suggests that the most important influences on public perceptions are educational level, pattern of exposure to the media, ethnic and party affiliation. By way of contrast religion plays little part in explaining diverse perspectives on foreign policy:

'for many Catholics, ethnic background probably has been a more important determinant of foreign policy opinions than their Catholicism.'

Levering goes on to quote a judgment made in 1950:

'American foreign policy acquires strength to the extent that it is derived from competitive discussion in front of a critical audience capable of judgment and discrimination.' (139)

That view seems to be supported by Freedman:

'It is very rare that we can make full use of our democratic institutions to have proper debates about basic security issues. Too often legislators and the media are content to

leave such problems to an élite of policymakers and specialists who are believed to have mastered the unique complexities of NATO doctrine and contemporary defence policy.'(140)

Freedman goes on to demand of the European peace protestors that they 'debate seriously and answer hard questions' and 'welcome[s] the opportunity for a good and constructive argument'.

He might well have been addressing the bishops of the American hierarchy. If Freedman was arguing that democratic institutions needed to recover their role in relation to basic security issues, then the very proper and serious debates with which the bishops prepared their pastoral might provide a demonstration of the possibilities from a perhaps unexpected source.

FOOTNOTES

1. This is recalled, for example, in George Weigel's attack on the account which 'classic historiography' gives of both the relationship between the hierarchy and national foreign policy goals, and the tradition of thought on war and peace. Weigel singles out John Tracy Ellis, the doyen of American Catholic historians, for attack.
 'The current foreign policy activism of the American bishops is thus perceived, by some, as an act of expiation for the uncritical stance of the bishops' predecessors... One gets the impression that many contemporary Catholic commentators in the moral debate over war and peace, security and freedom, are rather embarrassed by their American Catholic ancestors...'
 George Weigel, Tranquillitas Ordinis: The Present Failure and Future Promise of American Catholic Thought on War and Peace, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987, pp46-47.
 Weigel's revisionism fails to convince.
2. Jay Dolan, The American Catholic Experience, New York, Doubleday, 1985, p105.
3. Ibid., p107.
4. John Tracy Ellis, American Catholicism, 2nd ed. revised., Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1969, p51.
 see also Dolan, op.cit., p135.
5. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, ed. JP Mayer and M Lerner, Vol. 1, London, Fontana, 1968, pp355-357.
6. Ellis, op.cit., p83.
7. Dolan, op.cit., pp123-124.
8. Ellis, op.cit., p123.
9. Dolan, op.cit., p157.
10. Ibid., p191.
11. Archbishop Messmer of Milwaukee in Gerald Fogarty, The Vatican and the American Hierarchy from 1870 to 1965, Stuttgart, Anton Hiersemann, 1982, p211ff.
12. Dolan, op.cit., p307.
13. Ellis, op.cit., p124.
14. On the day before Congress declared war on Germany in April 1917, Cardinal Gibbons gave an interview:
 'In the present emergency it behooves every American citizen to do his duty, and to uphold the hands of the President... in the solemn obligations that confronts [sic] us.

The primary duty of a citizen is loyalty to country. This loyalty is manifested more by acts than words; by solemn service rather than by empty declaration. It is exhibited by an absolute and unreserved obedience to his country's call.'

Ellis comments:

'This statement from the dean of the American hierarchy, which one can scarcely conceive of a Catholic bishop of the United States making today without serious challenge, was indicative of... the manner in which the Catholic Church has reacted to every national crisis...'

Ellis, op.cit., p138.

15. David O'Brien calls the organization of the National Catholic War Council 'a real turning-point in the development of Catholic social consciousness' in David O'Brien, American Catholics and Social Reform, New York, Oxford University Press, 1968, p40.
16. Ellis, op.cit., pp141-142.
17. Gerald Fogarty, 'North America', in Modern Catholicism, ed. A Hastings, London, S.P.C.K., 1991, p327.
18. Ellis, op.cit., pp138-148
and O'Brien, op.cit., p120-149.
19. Dolan, op.cit., pp334-336.
20. O'Brien, op.cit., pp40-41.
Dolan recounts the origins of the initiative and how the bishops set about their teaching task after the First World War:
'Once the war ended, people began to look toward the reconstruction of American society, and numerous groups, religious as well as secular, put forth plans for postwar reconstruction. The Catholic bishops wanted to present their own program of social reconstruction, and they set up a committee to draft a document. Father John O'Grady... had the responsibility to produce such a plan. He turned to John Ryan, who at the time was writing his own program of reconstruction... O'Grady saw the unfinished talk on Ryan's desk and, after reading it, begged and pleaded with Ryan to expand it. Ryan reluctantly agreed... In February 1919 it appeared as the "Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction". Without a doubt it was "the most forward-looking social document ever to have come from an official Catholic agency in the United States."'

Dolan, op.cit., p344.
21. Ibid., p345.
22. Ellis, op.cit., p152.
23. Ibid., p151

24. Ibid., pp161-162.
25. Dolan, op.cit., p362.
26. 'By the end of the 1950's, Catholicism in the United States had clearly come of age... Being Catholic was indeed compatible with being American... Reasons for Catholic pride were everywhere: the successful television preacher Fulton J Sheen, record numbers of converts, record numbers of priests and nuns, and numerous new churches; a new Pope in 1958 charmed the world and filled Catholics with pride. The possibility of a Catholic in the White House also contributed to a sense of Catholic boosterism. But beneath the surface were strong undercurrents of reform, which challenged the smug confidence of mainstream Catholicism. Dolan, op.cit., p417.
27. quoted by J Philip Wogaman, Christian Perspectives on Politics, London, S.C.M., 1988, p193.
28. Ibid., pp189, 193-208.
29. de Tocqueville, op.cit., pp361-362.
30. James Reichley, Religion and American Public Life, Washington D.C., Brookings, 1985.
31. Ibid., p359.
32. 'The 1950's, often remembered as a somnambulant period in American Catholicism, were in fact a time of heated controversy over the issue of Catholicism and democracy. A renascent secular nativism, symbolised by Paul Blanshard, raised all the old shibboleths about the alleged incompatibility of Catholic social theory and the American experiment.' Weigel, op.cit., p67.
33. John Courtney Murray, We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1960
see also John Courtney Murray, 'The Issue of Church and State at Vatican II', Theological Studies, 27, 1966, pp580-606.
34. Weigel, op.cit., p105.
35. Weigel, op.cit., writes of 'an abandonment of the heritage', p177.
36. see the following by Hehir:
'Opposing the Nuclear Threat: The Convergence of Moral Analysis and Empirical Data', in L Grinspoon ed., The Long Darkness, Yale, 1986.
'Religious Organizations and International Affairs', Network Quarterly, 4:3, Summer 1976.
'From the Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II to "The

Challenge of Peace"', in Philip Murnion, ed., Catholics and Nuclear War, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1983, pp71-87.
 'The Roman Catholic Church as Transnational Actor: Amending Vallier', Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the International Studies Association, Washington D.C., February 22-26, 1978.

37. see the pioneering work by Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus, To Empower People: The Role of Mediating Structures in Public Policy, Washington D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1977.
38. Papers and discussions published in Michael Novak ed., Democracy and Mediating Structures: A Theological Inquiry, Washington D.C., American Enterprise Institute, 1980.
39. Philip Wogaman, 'The Church as Mediating Institution', pp69-81, 85-96, in Novak, op.cit.
40. Wogaman, in Novak ed., op.cit., p78.
41. see Robert Bellah et al., Habits of the Heart, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985, especially pp237-238.
42. The phrase is used as a title by Martin Marty, The Public Church Mainline-Evangelical-Catholic, New York, Crossroad, 1981.
 Marty argues that the 'public church' is the new centre of American public life, a 'communion of communions' in which each church maintains its integrity while recognising common ground with others.
 'Catholicism by definition has always been for public theology, though after Protestants came to dominate in America very few Catholic voices were able to gain a hearing. The hearing came after millions of Roman Catholic people arrived... [Cardinal Gibbons showed] that its public theology belonged in a pluralist republic that had been invented chiefly by Protestants and people of the Enlightenment... The Baltimorean did not want to renew church-state ties... he ministered to immigrants but was worried about too much heterogeneity: the nation was for him also a community of communities that was in danger of losing its commonality.'
 Marty's reading of Catholic history is a little quixotic, but he sees the integral relation of a 'public' church to one which is 'at home' in the culture, even if he identifies that as true of the American Catholic community a little too early.
43. Weigel, op.cit., pp107-138.
44. Ibid., p111.
45. Weigel, op. cit., p112.

46. John Courtney Murray, We Hold These Truths, op.cit., pp 7,8,17-18.
47. Ibid., p52.
48. David Hollenbach, 'Public Theology in America: Some Questions for Catholicism after John Courtney Murray', Theological Studies, 37, June 1976, p292.
49. Bishop Joseph Sullivan, 'The Task of a Public Church', Origins, 19:8, July 6th 1989, pp121-124.
50. Ibid., p123.
51. Ibid., p123.
52. Ibid., p123.
53. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Gannon Lecture at Fordham University in New York, in Origins, 13:29, December 29th 1983, pp491-494.
54. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Wade Lecture at St. Louis University, in Origins, 13:43, April 5th 1984, pp706-709.
55. as in Eric Hanson, The Catholic Church in World Politics, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987, p180. Bernardin spoke of 'a consistent ethic of life.'
56. Bernardin, Fordham op.cit., p491.
57. Ibid., p492.
58. Ibid., p492.
59. Ibid., p492.
60. Ibid., p493.
61. Ibid., p493.
62. Ibid., p493.
63. Ibid., p493.
64. Ibid., p494.
65. Ibid., p494.
66. Ibid., p494.
67. The N.C.C.B. held its autumn meeting in Baltimore from November 6th to 9th 1989, in observance of the bicentennial of John Carroll's naming as the first U.S. bishop. Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican Secretary of State, represented Pope John Paul II at the meeting. The Pope sent a message delivered by the apostolic pronuncio,

Archbishop Pio Laghi, at a Mass in Baltimore. The text of this is in Origins, 19:24, November 16th 1989, pp393-394. Earlier in 1989, from March 8th to 11th, the heads of the U.S. archdioceses met with the Pope and Vatican officials to discuss the theme 'Evangelization in the Context of the Culture and Society of the United States with Particular Emphasis on the Role of the Bishop as Teacher of the Faith.'

68. Archbishop May's comments were quoted in the address to the N.C.C.B. by Cardinal Casaroli in Baltimore at the bicentennial celebration.
Origins, 19:24, November 16th 1989, p389.
- 69, 70. This at least is the view of the American Catholic community's roots presented in the Pope's Bicentennial Message. Origins, 19:24, November 16th 1989, op.cit.
Dolan's account reveals a different emphasis:
'...the desire of American Catholics to be free and independent from all foreign influence or jurisdiction. Both the clergy and the people envisioned themselves as members of a "national " church. They were citizens of a new nation that had overthrown the yoke of foreign oppression, and as Catholics they did not want to be subject to a foreign authority, be it English or Roman... This desire for independence eventually persuaded Carroll [the Superior of the American mission] and the rest of the clergy that what American Catholicism needed was a bishop who by virtue of his office would be dependent on the Pope alone [and not on the Vatican congregation in charge of missions] and only in matters spiritual. Moreover they wanted this bishop to be elected by the American clergy... they conveyed their sentiments to the Pope and he went along with their request. The first election of a bishop in the United States took place in May 1789, and not surprisingly the popular choice of the clergy was John Carroll.'
Dolan, op.cit., pp105-107.
71. May, Origins, 19:24, November 16th 1989, p386.
72. Ibid., p387.
73. Will Herberg, Protestant, Catholic, Jew: an Essay in American Religious Sociology, New York, Doubleday, 1955, p175.
74. Ibid., pp175-176.
75. Andrew Greeley, American Catholics since the Council, an Unauthorized Report, Chicago, Thomas More Association, 1985, p26.
76. For an account of the impact of Smith's presidential defeat see Ellis, op.cit., pp150-151 and p186.
77. Ibid., p188.

78. Ibid., p187.
79. Evidence of the emblematic significance of the Kennedy campaign and presidency can be gathered from the weight accorded to his speech on September 12th 1960 to the Greater Houston Ministerial Association. Ellis quotes Theodore H White's judgment:
 'When he had finished, he had not only closed Round One of his election campaign - he had for the first time more fully and explicitly than any other thinker of his faith defined the personal doctrine of a modern Catholic in democratic society.'
Ellis, op.cit., p187.
For a more sober view see Weigel, op.cit., pp71-73. Weigel speaks of the need to strip away this layer of the Kennedy mythology and suggests that the Houston speech revealed him as a prophet of the 'naked public square'.
80. Weigel, op.cit., Tranquillitas Ordinis, p71.
81. Madonna Kolbenschlag ed., Between God and Caesar: Priests, Sisters and Political Office in the United States, New York, Woodstock Studies, Pied Piper, 1985, p3.
82. Ibid., p15.
83. for the text of Drinan's dignified statement see Kolbenschlag op.cit., pp314-315.
Hanson, op.cit., p180 and p393 sees the Vatican action linked to Drinan's votes for abortion funding.
84. Kolbenschlag, op.cit., p3.
85. Mary Hanna, Catholics and American Politics, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1979.
86. Ibid., p183.
87. Greeley, op.cit., p41.
88. Hanna, op.cit., pp101-147, 202.
89. Greeley, op.cit., p47.
90. Ellis, op.cit., p237.
91. in Hastings ed., op.cit., pp327-328.
92. Greeley, op.cit., p81.
93. Ibid., p86.
94. Ibid., pp89-90.
95. Ibid., p15.

96. In addressing what he calls the 'woman problem' Greeley speaks of
 'another case of convergence of religious change with trends of social and economic change which were already at work and which would have had a considerable impact on American Catholicism if it had not been for the Council.'
Ibid., p191.
97. William D'Antonio et.al., American Catholic Laity in a Changing Church, Kansas City, Sheed and Ward, 1989, p5.
98. Greeley, op.cit., p93.
99. Ibid., p94.
100. Ibid., pp30-31.
101. Ibid., pp33-34.
102. Michael O'Neill, The American Catholic Bishops and Foreign Policy: Vietnam and Latin America, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1974.
103. Ibid., p249.
104. Dorothy Dohen, Nationalism and American Catholicism, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1974.
105. James Hennessy, American Catholics: A History of the Roman Catholic Community in the United States, New York, Oxford University Press, 1981, p194
calls this Irish domination of the hierarchy a 'hibernarchy'.
106. Weigel, op.cit., pp216-228.
107. Fogarty, op.cit., p328.
108. O'Neill, op.cit., pp118-119.
109. B Benestad and F Butler, Quest for Justice: Statements of U.S. Catholic Bishops on the Political and Social Order 1966-1980, Washington D.C., U.S.C.C., 1981, p78.
110. O'Neill, op.cit., p121.
111. Ibid., p136.
112. Ibid., p166.
113. Hanna, op.cit., pp202-203.
114. Richard Neuhaus, The Naked Public Square, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1984, p262.
115. This is even true within the Catholic Church.
Thus, the Ad Hoc Committee in Defense of Life said after

Bernardin's Fordham speech on the consistent ethic of life that a survey of abortion opponents found that 99% 'oppose the Cardinal's conglomerate'. If people in the anti-abortion movement can't

'keep their issue the premier "single" one in the political spectrum, then it may well sink into the gooey swamps where yesterday's causes fester'

the Committee suggested.

Report in *Origins*, 13:43, April 5th 1984, p709.

116. Hanna, op.cit., sees here also a sign of the church's sensitivity to the 'rules of the game', a residual carefulness which makes the church unwilling to promote general recognition of its values if that promotion will lay it open to charges of breaching the church-state separation.
117. Ibid., p30-31.
118. Ibid., p31.
119. Kolbenschlag ed., op.cit., p15.
120. Neuhaus, op.cit., p267.
121. Robert Bellah et al., op.cit.
122. Ibid., pp237-238.
123. for Neuhaus see footnote #114.
124. Bellah, op.cit., pp237-238.
Bellah concludes:
'The Catholic Church moved toward the center of American public life, invigorating the major Protestant denominations as it did so.'
125. William Lee Miller, The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic, New York, Knopf, 1986.
126. Ibid., 288-289.
127. Ibid., p291.
128. D'Antonio, op.cit., p13.
129. Ibid., p23.
130. Robert Scott, 'Readings from the Nuclear Age', in Cole and Taylor, ed., The Nuclear Freeze Debate, op.cit., p205.
131. The Month, 14:2, February 1981, p39.
132. This section is based on
Walter Lafeber, The American Age: United States Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad since 1750, New York, Norton, 1989.

133. Ibid., p677.
134. In what follows use has been made of material contained in:
Robert Hoover, The MX Controversy, Claremont, Regina Books, 1982.
John Cartwright and Julian Critchley, Cruise, Pershing and SS-20: The Search for Consensus: Nuclear Weapons in Europe, London, Brassey's, 1985.
Lawrence Freedman, The Price of Peace, London, Macmillan, 1988.
Strobe Talbot, Deadly Gambits, London, Pan, 1985.
135. John Langan, 'Renewal of U.S. Foreign Policy', The Month, 15:8, August 1982, pp266-272.
136. Ibid., p266.
137. quoted in Ralph Levering, The Public and American Foreign Policy 1918-1978, Noew York, 1978, p19.
138. Ibid.
139. Ibid., p149.
140. Freedman, op.cit., p83.

CHAPTER 2

The Making of a Pastoral Letter

'I spect I grow'd. Don't think nobody never made me.'

Topsy, in 'Uncle Tom's Cabin': Harriet Beecher Stowe

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POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

In 1980 Maurice Dingman, Bishop of Des Moines, issued a pastoral letter to commemorate the anniversary, on the Feast of the Transfiguration, of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Dingman wrote:

'I invite you, in the course of reading this pastoral, to begin your tortuous conscience formation. I am in no mood to use a heavy-handed authoritarian approach, but I would like to open up some areas of reflection. I do this fully aware of my duty as a bishop to form the conscience of my people.'(1)

Dingman identified the contribution he hoped that his pastoral would make as one of the formation of conscience. It was not an unusual ambition for a bishop addressing the Catholic community in his own diocese. The tone he adopted was tentative and exploratory, and designed to act as an invitation to his people to reflect on his theme of the need for 'an alternative to war'.

For a bishop to address his people was not novel, nor was it novel for a bishop to urge reflection on the Christian response to the issues of peace and nuclear war.

Yet within three years the American hierarchy as a whole, acting as the most visible and authoritative voice of Catholicism within the U.S.A., was to issue a similar address in the Pastoral Letter The Challenge of Peace.

The Pastoral Letter makes explicit in its fourth paragraph that it was conceived as an invitation and a challenge to Catholics in the United States to join with others in shaping the conscious choices and deliberate policies which the present 'moment of supreme crisis' demanded.

The bishops acting collegially saw as their intention the creation of a community of conscience, not within one diocese only, nor indeed simply within the Catholic community, but within the United States as a culture. The teaching document which

aimed to contribute to that task came as the result of a long process, one which had deliberately sought to engage the bishops in learning as well as teaching, listening as well as speaking. The radical nature of the Pastoral was to be revealed not only in the judgments it contained on American strategic policy, but also in the way those judgments were reached. It disclosed not only the anxiety, the 'fear and preoccupation' which John Paul II had identified as oppressing so many people at the prospect of nuclear war.(2) It disclosed not only the resources, biblical, philosophical and historical, which the Catholic church could bring to the nuclear debate. It disclosed also the debate within the church about the nature of its teaching task. We will return to the contours of that debate in the final chapter. Suffice to say here that the process which the bishops followed

raises the exciting possibility that the learning/teaching cycle can afford a much higher measure of involvement to the people of God, who become less the passive recipients of teaching and more active participators in the formulation and reception of the church's reflection on key issues of faith and Christian practice. The preparation of the American bishops' pastoral letter The Challenge of Peace allows us to see both the possibilities for the future and the limitations of current practice.

This section will argue that, whatever the significance of the final document in developing the church's reflection on questions of war and peace, the process which led to that final draft is an important indicator of how the debate surrounding the church's teaching role was reflected in the American church. Information about the process does not simply illuminate the working of the ecclesiastical machine. Clearly, all teaching comes as the end of a process, even if that process is not open to public scrutiny. It was not that the American hierarchy simply lifted the lid off the ecclesiastical pot to allow the outsider a glimpse into the workings of the episcopal kitchen. As a characterization this would be truer of the account which Robert Kaiser gives of the events in the papal kitchen leading up to the promulgation of Humanae Vitae.(3) What the process leading to

the emergence of The Challenge of Peace shows is not simply an old process laid bare but rather an attempt to develop a new process attuned to different perceptions of the church's teaching task. In a number of ways that new approach was tentative, and perhaps not fully developed as a strategy at the outset. It had limitations, yet it offered the possibility of a new way of offering teaching which reflects changed perceptions about the church's task and indeed its nature.

The process can be seen as operating on a number of different planes, which this chapter will attempt to describe. First, there was the active life of the ad hoc committee itself. Chaired by Joseph Bernardin, composed to reflect a broad diversity of opinion within the hierarchy, aided in its work by staff of the U.S.C.C., it developed a pattern and style which can be characterized as consensus-seeking.

Secondly, there was the active engagement of the American hierarchy as a whole. Individual bishops continued to reflect upon the issues surrounding nuclear weapons, offering teaching within their dioceses. As a conference, the bishops issued challenges, reactions and support for the work of the committee at regular intervals. The debates at the annual meetings, particularly that of November 1982 and the extraordinary meeting at Collegeville in June 1982, can be seen as broadly supportive of the committee's work, while seeking to radicalize its thinking on key issues.

Thirdly, the process opened up the committee's work to the wider church. Most significant in this was the impact of the reactions of other hierarchies as that was felt at the Rome Consultation in January 1983. This linked the domestic process to the wider debate about the nature of the collegial experience, and the desirability of uniformity or complementarity in the church's teaching role as individual episcopal conferences spoke on the nuclear issue.

Fourthly, the process sought the active engagement of expert opinion, both from within the church and from the political and arms control community. It allows us to see how the task of teaching is inextricably linked to learning, the task of speaking to listening, while suggesting ways in which the church's peculiar competence can be compromised or enriched by the way in which it responds to expert opinion.

Fifthly, the process was consciously open to the interest of the American news media at certain points, particularly in November 1982. The role of the media, the way in which dissident groups within the American church and indeed the Reagan administration itself used that media interest, demonstrates the complexities of even limited exercises of openness in the teaching task.

Sixthly, the process suggests that the emergence of the 'product', the Pastoral, is not necessarily the culmination. Indeed, the process continues in the use by the Catholic community of the Letter in dioceses and parishes.

Seventh, the process is irreversible. To choose this way of preparing teaching opens the bishops to the expectation that all teaching should be framed in this manner. Dealing with that expectation, particularly as it might affect teaching on sexual matters, is now a given part of the American hierarchy's life.

These claims for the significance of the process must be set against limited knowledge of its detailed history. As George Weigel makes clear, an adequate presentation of the bureaucratic and forensic evolution of the pastoral from the creation of the ad hoc committee in January 1981 to the adoption by the bishops of the Letter at a special meeting in May 1983 remains to be written.⁽⁴⁾ What might have been such a history, Jim Castelli's The Bishops and the Bomb ⁽⁵⁾, is a frustrating but indispensable journalistic account of the process which leaves key questions unanswered, while not containing sufficiently well-presented primary material always to allow confident conclusions to be drawn. It is, however, the only account to date, and, at

the least, is useful for the timetable of events and some arresting quotations.

This section does not aim to be the 'adequate history' which Weigel signals the need of. What it tries to achieve, through analysis of the material available in Origins and some attention to comment in journals as the Letter was being prepared, is the suggestion of some ways in which the process as far as it can be known in this way focuses the questions sketched above, and bears out the claim that The Challenge of Peace is an important document in the emergence of a new approach to the teaching vocation of the church.

The method of analysis used here is dictated by the nature of the evidence available. I have adopted a broadly chronological approach, for this seems best suited to the description of a process. This section then is broadly descriptive of the process. It does not seek to offer detailed consideration of the emerging product. A later section will attempt to develop an analysis of the final text which is alert to the process which lay behind it.

This slightly artificial distinction between process and final product is necessary for two reasons. First, the nature of a process which involves wide consultation makes it a more elusive quarry than the reassuringly solid resultant text. Marrying analysis of the text's development to the description of the process would distract from the attempt to characterize, albeit tentatively, the history of that process. Secondly, if it is to be argued that the learning and teaching experience which the committee embarked upon is one which has implications for future teaching activity, it is desirable to isolate the process it inaugurated. This has warrant, as we shall see, from remarks made by those most intimately involved.

GENESIS

The Challenge of Peace had its bureaucratic origin in a decision of the N.C.C.B. at its annual meeting in 1980. The immediate impetus was provided by a varium or proposal for new business submitted by Bishop P. Francis Murphy, in which he called for a statement of Catholic teaching on the morality of war and peace, and urged that the teaching should be more widely promoted(6). Bishop Thomas Kelly, general secretary of the N.C.C.B., accepted the varium, and at the November meeting there was an extensive discussion on the moral and pastoral challenges posed by modern warfare. The outcome of the debate was a decision 'to pursue a study which would review the N.C.C.B. position thus far and would set a direction for the episcopal conference in the future'(7).

In January 1981 the new conference president, Archbishop John Roach, appointed an ad hoc committee on war and peace to draft a statement for debate at the N.C.C.B. annual meeting in the following year. Chaired by Joseph Bernardin, Archbishop of Cincinnati, the committee began work in the late spring of 1981, work which Bernardin described to his fellow-bishops in November that year as 'extremely delicate and difficult.'(8)

The choice of Bernardin as chairman and the composition of the committee he formed were themselves indications of that delicacy. Commentators single out among Bernardin's qualities his perceived ability to form consensus in difficult ecclesiastical circumstances(9).

The committee he was to chair contained an interesting diversity, one which would make the task of building consensus within the committee itself a demanding one(10).

It comprised an equal number of bishops and non-episcopal members.

Joseph Bernardin had been Archbishop of Cincinnati since 1972; he had served first in 1968 as Secretary then in 1974 as President of the N.C.C.B. During the committee's life he was appointed to succeed Cardinal Cody as Archbishop of Chicago, one of the major American archdioceses, and was named as a cardinal in 1983. He was regarded as one of the leading voices within the 'establishment liberal' group of bishops who at this time were dominant within the hierarchy.

John O'Connor, the major part of whose ministry, from 1952-1979, had been spent as Naval Chief of Chaplains, was made a bishop in 1979 as an auxiliary based in New York, the traditional locus for the Military Vicariate. Named as Bishop of Scranton in 1983, O'Connor became Archbishop of New York in 1984 and was named a cardinal in 1985. One of the most powerful conservative voices in the hierarchy, his clashes with Ed Koch, Mayor of New York, and his attacks on the Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro in 1984 were notorious.

O'Connor was complemented by Thomas Gumbleton, who had been the Auxiliary Bishop of Detroit since 1968. His name was almost synonymous with the major social-justice movements. Gumbleton presided over 'Bread for the World', headed the American chapter of Pax Christi, and was an advocate of total pacifism.

At the annual meeting of the N.C.C.B. in 1985 Gumbleton helped press for the setting-up of an ad hoc committee to assess, in the light of The Challenge of Peace, whether U.S. strategic policy met the conditions it set out for legitimate deterrence.

Roach asked Bernardin to recommend other episcopal members. Bernardin offered a pool of seven, and from these names Roach, Kelly and Bernardin chose two: Bishop Daniel Reilly of Norwich and Auxiliary Bishop George Fulcher of Columbus, Ohio.

Fulcher was a moral theologian and a member of the bishops' Doctrine Committee while Reilly chaired the committee with oversight of Catholic Relief Services and was closely involved in

the work of the church's world-wide aid and development programme.

Castelli identifies three characteristics common to Reilly and Fulcher: on the arms issue both were representative of the broad middle-ground and owed loyalty to no caucus; both had major military-industrial complexes in their dioceses, in Fulcher's case the B-1 bomber, and in Reilly's the Trident submarine; and both contributed to the consensus-building style needed within the committee.

A priest of the archdiocese of Boston, J. Bryan Hehir, was associate secretary of the U.S.C.C. Office of International Justice and Peace from 1973 to 1984, when he became secretary of the U.S.C.C. Department of Social Development and World Peace. Weigel writes of his 'immense influence with the Bishops' and refers to Cardinal Krol's opinion of Hehir as a
 'valuable research person...[who] does the digging and gives us the research'.

Weigel argues his contribution goes beyond research to the creation of a framework for the U.S.C.C.'s foreign policy analysis. Hehir is not simply a bureaucrat but has considerable intellectual gifts. In speeches and articles he has emphasised the role of the Catholic church as a transnational actor. On nuclear weapons questions he has promoted nuclear pacifism as a possible third voice between traditional pacifism and the just-war tradition, although, like the argument advanced in the Pastoral Letter, he does not espouse such an approach, holding to a 'centimeter of ambiguity' on the question of whether any use of small-yield nuclear weapons might be morally tolerable. Hehir has consistently argued that prevention of the use of nuclear weapons was the most urgent moral task and has advocated the idea of a 'bluff deterrent', one which by its simple existence threatens an adversary and provides a deterrent stability.

In addition to the meetings of the committee and the preparatory work they involved, Hehir along with another member, Bruce Russett, met with 'staff-level' members of the Reagan

administration in December 1982. In January 1983 he and Archbishop Roach attended a meeting of religious leaders in Vienna sponsored by Cardinal König and the veteran American churchman Theodore Hesburgh as a response to the Declaration on Prevention of Nuclear War issued under the auspices of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in September 1982. Within days he was in Rome, with Bernardin, Roach and Mgr. Hoyer for the Informal Consultation.

Also from U.S.C.C. came Edward Doherty, a retired foreign service officer and adviser on political-military affairs. Having failed to recruit William Shannon as principal outside consultant and drafter Bernardin, acting on Hehir's recommendation, approached Bruce Russett of Yale University, editor of the Journal of Conflict Resolution. Russett, who has published extensively on the question of nuclear war and peace, accepted the invitation to act as 'principal consultant'. The committee's membership was completed by Fr. Richard Warner, Indiana Provincial of the Congregation of the Holy Cross and Sister Juliana Casey of the Order of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as representatives of the American religious communities.

'MEETING THE CHALLENGE?'

What made the Catholic church in the United States so ready to take such an initiative, and to tackle its task in such an innovative way? In 1981, Philip Murnion gave an address to the Catholic Theological Society of America(11). Choosing as his title The Unmet Challenges of Vatican II, he outlined the features of the contemporary Catholic scene in the United States. He characterized it as a time of extraordinary vitality, of changes within the Catholic community's social and cultural complexion which acted as both enabling and inhibiting factors for the institutional church. In one passage he neatly characterized the immediate context in which the Bernardin committee was to work, and although he made no explicit reference to it his remarks serve as a useful way of understanding the work which the committee was to do, and the way in which it chose to do it.

'[This is] a time of unusual wholeness or convergence of diverse aspects of the church...on the one hand we are simultaneously trying to broaden participation in the church and attempting to take a more prophetic stance towards the world. This is not an easy combination to accomplish since prophets do not normally consult and committees are not normally risky.'(12)

The attempt to square the circle of participation and prophecy, he believed, is complicated by the heterogeneous nature of the Catholic community itself. Thus he argued that signs of vitality

'do not represent a coherent consensus that can serve as a basis for common and confident Catholic identity. We seem to have moved from a highly prescriptive approach to the church to a kind of laissez-faire approach in which pluralism remains...simply a tolerance of plurality.'(13)

Murnion's remarks suggest that the process which led to the issuing of The Challenge of Peace in May 1983 was rooted in the peculiar vitality of the American church as it continued to respond to the ecclesiological and cultural challenges of Vatican II.

The vitality he describes was evidenced in ways which, as we have already suggested, were inimical to older forms of teaching, the erosion of traditional deference to the teaching authorities and the new confidence of the laity militating against univocal 'authoritative' teaching. The question was whether teaching was still possible in the way which Bishop Murphy seemed to have in mind. Could the church both be responsive to the diverse constituencies within its life and yet elaborate an address to the world which carried the proper weight of the church's support?

Here, the process which the Bernardin committee embarked upon in 1981 sheds light on the nature of contemporary perceptions of the church's task in as vivid a way as the product, the Pastoral itself, sheds light on the church's reflection on war and peace. The process of reflection and investigation, the submission of drafts to wide debate, the challenges from within the American Catholic community and from the wider church is one which illustrates the complexity of the current task of the church. In short, the vitality of which Murnion spoke is not evidenced solely by the final text but by the process which led to it.

When he spoke the ad hoc committee had only begun its work. It remained to be seen whether the life of the Pastoral Letter from its discreet conception in November 1980 to its birth in the full glare of publicity in May 1983 would bear out Murnion's analysis.

The Bernardin committee proved to be ready to take risks and because of its own constitution to be alert to the tension between consultation and prophecy. What lay beyond its control was whether it could promote the coherent consensus that Murnion advocated as the precondition of a confident Catholic identity.

This section will argue that the process of the Pastoral's development was in itself a contribution to the new Catholic identity. The process itself helped create a church which understands its teaching office in a new way. It revealed tensions within the hierarchy and between the American bishops

and other teaching agents in a manner which demonstrated the response of the church to its teaching task.(14) It gave rise to fresh knowledge on key issues such as the bishops' relationship to the theologians, the church's engagement in public policy and relations with other Christian bodies in the U.S. In short, the process is an exemplar not only of the 'new moment' in the American church, but of a church which continues to grapple with the challenges of the Second Vatican Council.(15)

What made the situation ripe for the taking of an initiative, which was to prove such a source of interest on many fronts? As the committee began its work three factors can be identified, three seedbeds which proved fertile ground for its task.

THE FIRST SEEDBED:

The Argument of Precedent

In presenting his report Studying War and Peace in November 1981 Bernardin wrote:

'As bishops doing a moral-religious analysis of contemporary warfare within the tradition of Catholic moral teaching we do not start from scratch.'(16)

Bernardin began by pointing to the body of moral teaching built up by the universal church. He then drew attention to two other sources of teaching activity: the past teaching documents of the U.S. conference and the current teaching activity of individual U.S. bishops. Bernardin detailed in his November 1981 Report the range of public positions which the American hierarchy had adopted since 1968, all of which he suggested were set within the framework of the Pastoral Constitution. He drew specific attention to the Pastoral Letters Human Life in our Day (1968)(17), and To Live In Christ Jesus. (1976)(18), Cardinal Krol's testimony on SALT 11 before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1979(19) and the Administration Board's statement on registration and the draft in 1980. He concluded:

'Our statements have reflected the wider debate in the church, but they have also contributed to it on key issues. We have spoken to some issues with more specificity than any other episcopal conference'.(20)

For Bernardin, the teaching which was promoted by the universal magisterium and that developed by the American hierarchy while providing firm principles also left questions open. In particular, he suggested, the Council had opened the deterrence question but left it unresolved, indeed 'left it for precisely the kind of debate we now see in the church.'(21)

In this presentation Bernardin suggested that the work of his committee was in conformity with practice which had both a local and universal dimension. Within the United States, the previous teaching activity of the church had established the place of his committee, setting it in a developing tradition which had already produced bold initiatives. Within the wider church he set the task of his committee alongside that initiated by other hierarchies:

'It is important to note that the hierarchies of Holland, Germany and England, in response to many in their care, are conducting inquiries into these issues of nuclear policy.'(22)

He stressed the desirability of maintaining contact with them.

Bernardin's was a somewhat disingenuous presentation. It was evident that the American hierarchy had declared its mind on previous occasions, and that the European hierarchies were preparing to do so. The fact that the American bishops were preparing to address the issue of nuclear war given the impact it would have on the debate within a superpower, and in such a manner that the debate would be an integral part of the Letter's production, made the task of Bernardin's committee very individual.

THE SECOND SEEDBED:

Responsiveness to the Public Agenda

A second element relating to the American hierarchy's initiative concerns its timing, and its connectedness to the nuclear debate within the U.S. itself. Castelli writes that many of the policies which dominated the public debate in the 1980's were born under the Ford and Carter administrations, but

'Reagan's election - with the rhetoric and policies he brought to office - was the single greatest factor influencing the bishops' decision in November 1980 and all that followed.'(23)

The growth of the Nuclear Freeze Movement and the debate about the neutron bomb in particular seemed to generate what Weigel calls an 'apocalyptic sense' among the bishops, which brought with it a conviction that they stood in an utterly new situation with no precedent or history to read it against.(24)

Weigel's view is that this contributed to the bishops' most serious failure, their uncoupling of the idea of peace from rightly ordered political community, which led to a myopia affecting attitudes towards the Soviet Union, allowing an easy parallelism of attitude towards the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. The bishops, he argues

'were ...influenced by currents of thought in the wider American political culture, in a manner remarkably parallel to the vulnerability of American Catholic commentators during the Vietnam War.'(25)

These are matters of opinion and do not yield easily to analysis. What Bernardin would allow in a speech at Louvain in February 1984 was that the bishops had a sense that the nuclear arms race was heading in an even more dangerous direction both in quality and quantity.

'Faced on the one side by the urgent papal pleas for a reduction of global resources away from instruments of destruction and towards the satisfaction of the basic human needs of the poor and on the other side, by proposals to expand the nuclear arsenals of both superpowers, the U.S. bishops were convinced by 1980 that a clear moral voice was needed in our country calling for a drastic change in our

definition of security.'(26)

THE THIRD SEEDBED:

Moral Consistency

In the Louvain speech Bernardin referred to a third factor in the decision to proceed with a Pastoral, a factor which was a 'motivating force' for the episcopacy, namely the desire to promote a consistent ethic of life. In that speech he described the bishops' opposition to liberalized abortion legislation as being more vocal, visible and persistent than that of any other institution. As well as being an indication of the bishops' 'sanctity of life' approach, the involvement in the abortion debate had exposed them to sustained involvement in a public-policy debate which he described as being at the centre of American political life.

We have already sketched Bernardin's promotion of the 'seamless garment' approach to moral decision-making, in which a wide range of moral decisions, from those of personal moral choice to the moral factors governing international politics are seen as being informed by a 'pro-life' stance.

What Bernardin suggested in this context was that the source of the bishops' desire to speak on the question of nuclear war was not simply a response to one issue, albeit one of critical importance. It was an integral part of a wider concern to build a moral vision.

The timing of the committee's work was the outcome of the convergence of historical particularity and underlying trends.

Bernardin himself said:

'our motivation was not narrowly political or partisan: it was rather due to a convergence of several forces of long-term significance which created a basic consensus of opinion among the bishops'.(27)

The consensus that the issue of war and peace should be addressed was readily established at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' meeting in 1980: establishing the nature of that address demanded time and patience.

LISTENING AS LEARNING:

1. The Investigative Phase

By the time he presented his interim report to the Bishops in November 1981 Bernardin's committee had established the priority of tackling the moral problem of nuclear war. Although he acknowledged the need to establish a positive theology of peace and to examine the issues surrounding conventional war, Bernardin established the intention to concentrate on the nuclear problem. In doing so he made clear that the committee's first objective would be to address the church, and then to bring to the public debate the best line of argument available. This two fold approach was an attempt to be faithful to both church and culture: on the one hand, the church was called to a specific form of witness by virtue of its setting in one of the nuclear superpowers, on the other

'we need to recall that as Americans and as people of faith we are expected to live by [the gospel], and, in faith, to accept the consequences of doing so.'(28)

How was the ad hoc committee to begin addressing its task? Bearing in mind Bernardin's statement that the work would take the bishops into an area of moral teaching only partly explored by the Second Vatican Council, the initial need was to acquire an analytical toolkit.

That need is reflected in the expertise which the committee sought to exploit. There was the need to become immersed in the technical detail of nuclear weapons systems and policy, an immersion which was seen to be logically prior to an examination of current United States nuclear policy. There was also the need to refine the bishops' awareness of the moral-ethical issues surrounding the debate.

It is important to draw a distinction between the pattern of consultation required by the committee to discharge its function intelligently, and the pattern of consultation which allowed the committee to initiate a document which could, in some way,

express the mind of the church. At this stage it is the former pattern we see at work, the conscious decision to engage in a learning experience, carefully phased, designed to equip the members of the committee to discharge its investigative and teaching tasks.

This first phase of the committee's work lasted from June 1981 until the presentation of the First Draft in July 1982, and this part of the drafting process was characterized by the pattern of hearings which were established. The committee met at least once a month, at times more frequently, and the hearings gave the members access to a wide range of expertise as they listened to the views of the witnesses. The appendix to the second draft published in October 1982 gives this rationale for the process:

'The witnesses were selected to provide the committee with a spectrum of views and diverse forms of professional and pastoral experience. After several meetings with non-governmental representatives the committee met with members of the administration.'(29)

The largest single group was that described as 'moral-theologians-ethicists', no fewer than twelve. Seven former government officials gave evidence including former Secretaries of Defense Harold Brown and Arthur Schlesinger, the others being arms control experts. Surprisingly perhaps there were only four scriptural scholars. The body of consulted opinion was completed by conflict resolution experts, retired military personnel, a physician, and Catholics who had been active in peace witness.(30)

The interplay between the bishops and the U.S.C.C. staff members arises during this first phase of the committee's work. Castelli credits Doherty with the preparation of a list of suggested specialists at the outset.(31) Reacting to it Gumbleton had noted the absence of scripture scholars while Bernardin criticized it as being dominated by technical experts, and insufficiently alive to the need to present a moral vision. After the first meeting committee members sent the U.S.C.C. staff members names of those whose contributions would be useful.

Reilly is credited with the observation that the committee was surprised by the calibre of those willing to address it, particularly those from government service. The most important testimony was probably that which came in early 1982 from Schlessinger and Brown, and Castelli suggests that they were particularly important for the 'swing men' Reilly and Fulcher.

Reilly recalled that the two were

'so forceful in resistance to nuclear war, in saying that nuclear war has to be avoided at all costs as unthinkable madness. They were very affirming of the committee's work.'(32)

Testimony from Reagan administration officials came later in the process, Bernardin being determined that the encounter with the established official position should wait on the committee's own reflection.

If part of the avowed aim of calling expert witness was to immerse members in the debate that immersion seems to have conscientized Reilly and Fulcher in particular. Both backed the freeze movement, while Fulcher joined Pax Christi.

The role of the non-episcopal members of the committee arose out of the way in which it engaged in its task. Bruce Russett, described as 'principal consultant' in the Appendix to draft 2, was engaged initially as 'author', and Bernardin sketched out the remit of an author to the ad hoc committee at its first meeting. Appointing such a person was an established procedure, but the description was dropped at Russett's insistence as it seemed to imply a diminution of the bishops' own role.

More marked are the expressions of sensitivity arising out of the part played by Bryan Hehir, whom Weigel describes as

'the single most influential figure in the transformation of the American bishops public commentary on issues of war and peace'.(33)

LISTENING AS LEARNING:

2 The hierarchy reacts

In seeking to characterize the process it is important at this juncture to establish that the committee was working within the wider community of the church. Its formation was a response to perceived pastoral needs within the Catholic community. Those needs and the reflection they gave rise to were not the monopoly of the committee. It established a process but it was itself part of a larger process, as diverse parts of the church continued to reflect and act on the nuclear question. What needs to be stressed is that the committee did not act as a diversion, a convenient method of postponing the church's engagement in the debate. Rather, the urgency and legitimacy of its task was shown by the energy devoted to the war and peace debate throughout the church, a debate which in itself contributed to a process of which the Bernardin committee was only a part.

By May 1982 an initial draft had been drawn up and was circulated to the bishops in the following month.⁽³⁴⁾ It was at this point that the committee decided to share the drafts with other episcopal conferences and the Holy See, asking for comments and suggestions.⁽³⁵⁾

The Vatican response came in July in the form of a generally favourable critique from the Justice and Peace Commission. It praised in particular the sections on pastoral guidance. Concern was expressed about its length and clarity, and, signalling a matter which was to be very important in the preparation of the third draft, its specificity was queried.⁽³⁶⁾ One month earlier Cardinal Casaroli had delivered the Pope's address to the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament.

The draft elicited a massive domestic reaction - some 700 pages of comment. Some seventy bishops sent comments, and critically for the process within the wider church, about a third of these referred to their own consultation on the draft. Castelli

characterizes the dominant theme in the reaction as one of demand for the Letter to be strengthened and made more specific. He credits the 'tentative' tone of the first draft in part to Russett's deliberate aim of offering a 'centrist' position and Bernardin's desire not to offer a document in advance of the conference's own reaction.

That should not, however, be taken to mean that the committee had a purely reactive role. In June 1982 in Boston Bernardin told participants at a conference that American Catholics should make theirs a peace church:

'The creation of a constituency for peace may be the most important contribution we have to make to the public debate...[becoming a peace church] means shaping the public position of the church as an institution and the personal consciences of the members of the community of the church into a coherent, consistent force for acknowledging and respecting the dignity and rights of all the members of the human family, reversing the arms race and redirecting resources to the human needs of our citizens and the poor of the globe.'(37)

While the Bernardin committee could establish its own process of reflection on the nuclear issue there were other centres within the church active at this time. Two in particular merit attention.

There is first the activity of individual bishops. Bernardin had issued a self-denying ordinance for the duration of the committee's task, specifically refraining from the advocacy of a particular line. Other members of the committee felt no such inhibitions, and in this they were simply part contributors to an astonishing range of episcopal initiatives, what Castelli calls 'a stunning picture of a hierarchy up in arms about the arms race.'(38)

It was already clear that addressing the issue of nuclear weapons led inexorably to a treatment of current U.S. nuclear policy.

Apart from the simple fact of the level of activity on this question by individual bishops which, it could be argued, was

both stimulated by and gave impetus to the work of the committee, some of the statements have an intrinsic interest. From the many pastoral statements issued by bishops two fundamental questions recurred, both of which illuminated this context of the committee's work.

'MY COUNTRY.....'

First, was it justifiable to seek to address the issue of nuclear weapons in such a way that it would include criticism of government policy? Many were in no doubt, among them Bishop Anthony Pilla of Cleveland who released a Pastoral Study in August 1981. Pilla arranged his text around a series of questions, and ended with this lucid statement of the right of the church to be active in this study:

'Those who govern us do so by our consent. Patriotism neither presupposes nor requires acquiescence to their every decision. Our nation's democratic traditions support, are indeed hinged upon, the right and the responsibility of the governed to question and scrutinize the decisions and policies of public officials. Our country has witnessed much social progress in the last two decades, notably in civil rights, because of the courage of relatively few people who were willing to challenge the policies and practices of the many. Even more important, our Christian responsibility requires us to bring gospel values to bear on the actions of our governments. As the prophets criticized the immorality of the societies in which they lived, so we must unite to oppose the evils inherent in our own political system. The emphasis placed on military buildup and weapons proliferation in our country is one such evil.'(39)

Pilla was in no doubt that the church could legitimately act prophetically while retaining its place in the culture.(40) Archbishop Roach made this the main theme of his presidential address to the N.C.C.B. in November.(41)

Within the hierarchy it was the presence of bishops who were members of Pax Christi which was most likely to remind their brothers of what Pilla called 'gospel values'. Among Pax Christi's original founding members in the US in 1973 was Thomas Gumbleton.(42) The Pax Christi caucus had grown to encompass 54 bishops by the winter of 1981, and they were prominent among those who issued statements expressing concern at the growing nuclear threat.(43)

It is the sheer number of individual episcopal statements that helped form the framework for the committee's work at this stage, and demonstrated the ease with which individual bishops adopted a stance critical of Administration policy. They had in common an uncomplicated condemnation on moral grounds of any use of nuclear weapons, with a corresponding desire to alert people to the moral dimension of the nuclear debate. They went beyond the question of strategic policy in many cases to condemn the arms race which led to such neglect of other needs in the world, and to express frustration at the intransigence of those responsible.

McCormick suggests that there were a number of factors which brought so many bishops 'out of the nuclear closet'.(44) The number of 'conversions' to Pax Christi was in itself a response to current events and opinions on Administration policy. The conscientization which followed membership exerted a pressure which ensured that the more individual bishops spoke out on the nuclear issue, the heavier became the obligation on the others to do likewise. There was also, outwith the U.S., the impact of Pope John Paul II's strong statements on the arms race. As Hanson points out such statements, particularly when delivered at places such as Coventry or Hiroshima, have an 'expressive' power which goes beyond the actual content.(45) The reiteration of the Pope's concern for peace-making and his calls to work for peace have an important, although unquantifiable, impact on bishops as they establish priorities for their public pronouncements.

....RIGHT OR WRONG?'

The second question which arose concerned the pastoral implications of seeking to teach, given that the committee was called into existence to respond to the pastoral needs of the church. Here the diverse constituencies within the church set bishops different tasks. Cardinal Cooke in a letter to all military chaplains sought to reassure his audience that the teaching of the church had not changed:

'I know that you and our people may be faced with difficult decisions in the future, and I will try to keep you appraised of the church's position in each problem situation. I am well aware that a wide variety of opinions have been expressed by some people concerning the direction in which the church should be moving. My responsibility as I see it, as your bishop, is to advise you of the official teaching of the Catholic Church.'(46)

By this Cooke meant a restatement of some of the relevant sections from the Pastoral Constitution.

In a letter issued after the emergence of the first draft Archbishop Hickey of Washington addressed the particular situation of those in his diocese:

'I specifically hope that this letter and the discussion it invites will help prepare us to respond to the national pastoral letter on war and peace next fall. This national pastoral and the entire nuclear discussion touch our archdiocese more directly than any other local church. For many of our people there are immensely personal and professional issues as well as important public concerns... members of our community develop and implement the policies which govern our nuclear arsenal and arms control negotiations. In addition, our community would surely be one of the first targets in any nuclear exchange.'(47)

For some bishops the immediate pastoral context was one which exposed them in their anti-nuclear stance to public hostility. The two best-known episcopal examples of what might loosely be called a 'prophetic' stance, if by that we mean what Pilla defined as 'the courage... to challenge the policies and practices of the many'(48) are Leroy Matthiesen and Raymond Hunthausen.

Leroy Matthiesen, the Bishop of Amarillo, in whose diocese work on the neutron bomb would be carried out, denounced the decision to build such weapons, and called on the 2400 men at the Pantex Corporation, the final assembly plant for U.S. nuclear weapons, to quit and seek other employment. In this call Matthiesen was supported by the other twelve Texan bishops.

Equally dramatic was the action taken by Raymond Hunthausen, Archbishop of Seattle. He described the Bangor Trident submarine base in his diocese as the 'Auschwitz of Puget Sound', and in protest at what he regarded as America's search for nuclear arms superiority withheld 50 per cent of his income tax. Hunthausen saw his action as one designed to challenge a 'paralyzed political process' which was matched by a mood of public apathy, and to encourage public protest. The archbishop was clear that his intention was to disturb this unquiet peace.(49)

The interplay between the committee's deliberations and the continuing debate within the American church is important to note. It is beyond the scope of this section to offer judgments on the mutual impact of this interplay.

Two tentative conclusions can be offered about the context of this first phase of the committee's work.

Both the committee's work and the activity of individual bishops demonstrated that at least for the 'spiritual shepherds' the issues of war and peace were matters demanding serious attention and energy. From the meeting of the N.C.C.B. in 1980 which called the ad hoc committee into being, the debate was one which engaged many members of the hierarchy beyond the 'Peace bishops' of Pax Christi. The growth of the Pax Christi group within the hierarchy is itself evidence of this. The test was whether the teaching activity of individual bishops helped create a community

of conscience within their dioceses. Bishop Malone in a speech on the church's social doctrine issued a warning:

'As Catholics we can be proud of our excellent social teaching tradition. If properly understood, the social doctrine gives the Christian activist an ample basis for application. However, our formation of our people in social justice lags behind the body of teaching. The 'trickle-down' theory seems to have sprung a leak.'(50)

Would the combination of the teaching activity of individual bishops, public interest in and awareness of the Bernardin committee's work, and public attention to the frequent papal teaching on war and peace set free the potential activism of the Catholic community?

Secondly, the bishops' interventions both give a context for the committee's work and indicate some of the areas in which the bishops sought greater clarity. Questions of public policy and pastoral concerns were inextricably linked. The desires to form a community of conscience in nation and church were mutually supportive. Integral to the nature of that formation was the promotion of debate. Thus the formation of conscience was forwarded not only by the convergence of episcopal attitudes displayed in the final stage of the Pastoral's progress, but also by the debate in the early stages. Bryan Hehir locates this view of formation both in post-conciliar ecclesiology and in the nature of American culture.(51) He defends the right of the church to address societal issues, whether peace, like the U.S. bishops or the economy, like the Canadian bishops, and argues that one sign of a broader understanding of the church's mission is its commitment to the promotion of debate. This is revealed in The Challenge of Peace. Disagreement, debate and exchange are now acceptable within the maturing church. This would suggest that to speak of the pastoral concern of the bishops is not simply to identify their listening to the anxiety of their people in the face of the nuclear threat, but is also to reflect on their concern to promote wide debate. It was not so much that the bishops' pastoral concern was reactive, that they acted as advocates giving voice to popular concern and then shaping new

directions for public policy. Rather, the pastoral concern was expressed in their desire to see that vigorous debate which would help transform the United States into a community of conscience.

THE COST OF LISTENING

At the outset, it had been the committee's intention to submit the draft Pastoral for debate and acceptance at the N.C.C.B. meeting in 1982. On August 2nd 1982 Bernardin, now Archbishop of Chicago, wrote to his fellow-bishops submitting a new timetable for the committee's work.(52) In order to allow 'an extended period of consultation and discussion' a new draft was to be prepared, responsive to the discussion already engendered. The new draft was to be submitted to the November meeting for discussion. Only then, when the discussion there had been assimilated by the committee, would a third draft be prepared. That final text would be offered for approval in the spring or autumn of 1983.

What led to the delay? Bernardin offered two reasons: first, the committee needed more time if it were to deal seriously with the 'broad range' of ideas and recommendations communicated to it, and secondly, the bishops themselves had asked for an extended period to allow proper study and response. The intention was that the new draft be available one month before the November meeting.

Lying behind Bernardin's statement were other considerations which demanded a more extended timetable, and which demonstrate the committee's commitment to consultation. They also show how the experience of consultation moulded the process.

First, theologians were to be consulted. The draft was to be sent to a 'wide spectrum' of theological opinion at the same time as it was sent to the bishops. This went far beyond the procedure already established. In the first phase the committee had, as noted earlier, invited specific briefings from theologians, especially those active in moral theology. Further, individual bishops as they reflected upon the draft had sought theological expertise. What was now proposed went further.

Theologians were to be invited to send recommendations directly to the committee by the end of October. A synthesis of their comments would then be made available to all the bishops at the Annual Meeting.

Secondly, there was the desire to have the Pastoral become truly a bishops' statement, a national document Bernardin regarded it as potentially

'one of the more important initiatives of our conference... awaited with much interest by Catholics as well as the broader community'.(53)

He expressed a desire that the November meeting should facilitate 'maximum participation'. To aid this a procedure was developed. The intention was to go beyond the presentation of a draft to be debated, amended and approved. Rather, an 'in-depth discussion' was to be offered, and the tenor of this would help frame the final draft. Just as earlier Bruce Russett had eschewed the title of author as one which he feared would weaken the clear episcopal nature of the pastoral, so Bernardin clearly regarded the process by which the bishops accepted the Pastoral as one which must allow it to be seen to carry the full weight of the episcopal conference's authority.

Thirdly, the bishops had already been afforded the opportunity to experience a new style of reflection when they gathered at the so-called 'Collegeville Meeting' in June.(54) For ten days, from June 13-23, the hierarchy met at St John's University in Minnesota. There, freed from the execution of routine business, the bishops had first received the committee's first draft, and had been afforded the opportunity to reflect at length on the role of a bishop in the church. Bernardin acknowledged the desire to discuss the draft in a way which drew on the 'affective collegiality' of the Collegeville experience.

The nature of the aptly-named Collegeville experience is captured by one of the six 'theme papers', 'The Bishop as Teacher', delivered by Archbishop Hickey of Washington. In it he tackled a number of topics relating to the teaching office of the bishop,

both within his diocese and in collegial action at different levels. The impact on the Pastoral's development of the affective collegiality experienced at Collegeville is difficult to assess, yet among Hickey's reflections are some which seem to connect strongly with the process in which the committee and the hierarchy were engaged.

Hickey vigorously defended the collective exercise of the teaching office as one which was necessary in order to respond to specific challenges arising from the life of the nation. Collective issues demanded collective response. In seeking such a response tensions were inevitable and the bishops as a body needed to face up to this painful part of the process:

'In some...areas we may have to face up to extremely new and largely American challenges. We need to have the willingness to face this fact and feel a sense of collective responsibility...If we refuse to exercise our ministry of teaching because we cannot find agreement, we create the conditions for a vacuum of authority and a loss of credibility. A key question to pray over during these days is, do we have the courage to dialogue with one another, to challenge one another and to confront one another in order to reach our people collectively...?'(55)

The question Hickey raised was one which had an impact not only on the bishops as they met at Collegeville but also on the process in which the ad hoc committee was engaged. The impact was to be felt at different levels: within the committee itself with its diverse membership, in the committee's response to the reactions its offered draft elicited, and most vividly in the November meeting of the N.C.C.B., which considered the Second Draft.

The annual meeting of the N.C.C.B. in 1982 allows us to see this stage of the process in a particularly vivid way.(56) Meeting in Washington, November 15-18, the conference devoted the major part of its time to the new draft. Bernardin first outlined the draft's content and rationale and was followed by speeches from five bishops, chosen as 'designated intervenors'. Their statements were followed by small-group discussion.

The new draft was divided into four sections, but most public attention centred on the second, 'War and Peace in the Modern World: Problems and Principles'. Here the impact of the committee's thinking on U.S. strategic policy was most explicit. The draft opposed counterpopulation warfare and the initiation of nuclear war. The committee expressed grave doubts about the possibility of waging limited nuclear war. While the draft accorded a measure of moral acceptance to deterrence, it conditioned that acceptance by making three qualifications: deterrence must be designed to deter, that is to prevent the use of nuclear weapons by another state and must not encourage the building of a war-fighting capability; to that end sufficiency and not superiority must be the guide to what was adequate; and lastly, each individual weapon or strategy must be evaluated as to whether or not it promoted arms control and disarmament. Moving from these guiding principles to specific recommendations the draft opposed 'first-strike' weapons and all proposals which would lower the nuclear threshold and blur the distinction between nuclear and conventional arms. Finally the draft lent its support to a bilateral nuclear freeze, the pursuit of negotiations aimed at bilateral arms cuts, a comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and suggestions for removing nuclear weapons from possible accidental use.

On the final day the general session was given over to an open forum on the Pastoral during which no fewer than thirty-two bishops reacted to its content and implications. It was during this meeting that a letter was received from the White House.

Towards the end of his presentation Bernardin had raised the question of what contribution the pastoral aimed to make, both to church and society:

'Within the Church the contribution of the pastoral letter should be assessed in terms of the process and the product. The process of discussion, writing and witness which already has been generated by the statements of bishops and particularly the pastoral may be the most important long-term consequence of our efforts. Today the issue of war and peace is identifiably alive in the Catholic Church. We have said in the pastoral letter that the church's ministry should

be at the service of peace. The process of involving the community from the bishops' conference through the parishes of the country is absolutely essential to this goal. The process has already begun and needs to be continued. The product of our effort, the pastoral letter itself, will be a crucial element in fashioning a church at the service of peace. The letter should be at once a pastoral guide, a policy statement and a word of hope spoken in the face of fear generated by the nuclear threat.'(57)

This structuring of the meeting allows us to hear the diversity of voice within the hierarchy itself on the nuclear issue. It made Hickey's challenge all the more pertinent. Building a worthwhile consensus would involve being truthful about that diversity while not allowing the range of views to sap the bishops' planned teaching of its clarity and boldness. This consensus was in part accomplished by the way in which the bishops had become sensitized to the implications of the process which the committee had chosen.

'TO BOLDLY GO?'

It was the Apostolic Delegate, Pio Laghi, who made this explicit in his address to the N.C.C.B. Laghi praised the United States episcopal conference as 'a pioneer in exploring the implications of collegiality', and referred explicitly to the Collegeville Meeting and to the process adopted at the November meeting as displays of American leadership in this approach. For collegiality to be realized, he continued, meant a willingness on the bishops' part to move beyond the affective level of engagement, to the more testing effective level by displaying willingness to engage in teaching and pastoral ministry. He warned, however, that the effectiveness of that engagement depended on unanimity of voice. In Laghi's view,

'teaching... which was either muted or fractionalized would not serve the best interests of either the church or the world'.(58)

That did not imply, however, that all debate and discussion should be hidden from view, but simply that the 'product' should carry the unanimous endorsement of the American hierarchy. Unanimity of voice was for Laghi a precondition of effective collegial practice.

That view was shared by Bernardin, who had the task of forging consensus within the Committee, and who was determined that the committee should speak with one voice, however protracted the process. A similar concern animated the view advanced at the Vatican Consultation in January 1983 that the different hierarchies in addressing the nuclear question should do so with unanimity.

Unanimity may always be desirable. How was it to be attained? The very experience of negotiating that unanimity frightened some. For Cardinal Cooke the experience of the consultation process within the archdiocese of New York and the Military Vicariate demonstrated the pitfalls and rendered the whole understanding hazardous. Cooke spoke of:

'the great potential which the draft has for seriously dividing our church and our nation. Both the local consultation and other reactions forthcoming show the

division on the specifics of the issues - of possession, use, threat and the whole question of deterrence.'(59)

When did legitimate diversity of voice become a fractured witness? Bishop Francis Schulte of Philadelphia, looking ahead to the planned use of the Pastoral, saw a danger that fracture on this issue could become institutionalized:

'We have already witnessed movement toward polarization within the church on this issue....we have seen similar discussion between and among individual bishops and groups of bishops. ... This points to the need for clarity in what we say. The interventions of the last few days suggest that the desired clarity has not been achieved.'(60)

Yet, despite these reservations which seemed to suggest that developing the necessary consensus was beyond the bounds of probability, the bishops accepted the Bernardin Committee's draft as a basis for further reflection and voted overwhelmingly to meet in Chicago in May to give consideration to a third draft. This level of acceptance was aided by two factors.

First, the way in which the meeting was structured favoured maximum participation by individual bishops while it promoted the continued work of the committee. For Bernardin, its principal benefit was its demonstration of the bishops' strong support for the publication of a Pastoral on the issue, and one which would be completed within six months.

At the meeting Bernardin introduced the draft, outlined its content and thrust, and drew attention to the principles which had guided the committee. Bernardin's introduction was followed by presentations from five bishops, chosen by the USCC staff as 'designated intervenors'.(61) The choice was calculated to provide a platform for those who had clear and well-defined constituencies. Thus there was Cardinal Cooke with his care for the military vicariate: Archbishop Philip Hannan known to be hostile to the draft and arguing for its replacement by papal texts: Cardinal Krol with his high profile in the hierarchy supplemented by his relations with the East European lobby in the church: Archbishop Quinn who had regularly addressed the nuclear

question and Archbishop Hunthausen, well-known as a nuclear pacifist. These provided a broad spectrum of episcopal opinion.

After the presentations the bishops formed small groups aided by 'professional facilitators'. At the end of the day's discussion a straw poll revealed 195 bishops in 'basic agreement', 71 with 'major reservations', and 12 in 'basic disagreement'.(62)

The following day saw a plenary discussion during which some thirty-two bishops spoke. The contributions made by individual bishops, and the analysis of reactions within the small group discussion under headings such as 'theology', 'socio-political content', 'purpose, tone, style, length, and intended audience' were regarded as an important part of a process which was not yet complete. It was a sustained piece of that collegial action which Laghi had called for, and it helped set the agenda for the next phase of the Committee's life.

The second factor was one which could not have been predicted, the public intervention of a senior member of the Reagan administration. During the N.C.C.B. meeting a letter from William P Clark, White House National Security Adviser, to Cardinal Bernardin was leaked to the New York Times. The letter was highly critical of the draft pastoral, and expressed regret that

'the committee's latest draft continues to reflect fundamental misreadings of American policies and continues essentially to ignore the far-reaching American proposals that are currently being negotiated with the Soviet Union'.(63)

Clark, writing on behalf of President Reagan, Secretary Schultz, Secretary Weinberger, Director Rostow, and other Administration officials, argued that the Administration's position was guided by moral considerations and defended both the idea of deterrence and the arms control record of the Reagan Administration.

He described his letter as a response to the committee's request for a view on the second draft, as a contribution to the consultative process, but it was remarkable more for its timing

and method of release than for its content. Reagan's choice of Clark, well-known as a traditionalist Catholic, spoke for itself. The release of the letter to the Press, and its distribution to all the bishops during the N.C.C.B. meeting itself, seemed a not very subtle means of applying public pressure. Castelli sets it in the context of a wave of conservative pressures on the bishops, designed to bring about a modification of the Pastoral. In his view, however, such pressure did not have the desired effect:

'Many bishops...and veteran church observers believed - correctly - that the Administration's lobbying would be counter-productive, more likely to make the bishops close ranks than become divided.'(64)

Although the Clark letter remained an important sign of the extent to which the drafting committee was regarded as moving to positions at variance with the Reagan Administration's views, it is not possible to identify any textual changes within the next stage of the committee's work which owe their existence to it. The real origin of the changes which were to come lies in the November meeting of the N.C.C.B., the continued work of the Committee itself and the fruits of the 'fraternal exchange' at the Vatican in January 1983. This was made clear in a statement issued by Bernardin in response to Clark's letter.

'we recognize the value of and welcome new and continuing opportunities for discussion. Certainly Clark's letter will be given careful consideration as the committee begins modifying the second draft of the pastoral in accordance with guidance provided by our brother bishops.'(65)

THE DRIVE TO COMPLETION

As the bishops dispersed after their annual meeting, the Bernardin committee faced the task of assimilating the fruits of the discussion, and of working towards the preparation of a final draft in the course of the next six months. This period was not one which afforded the committee the leisure of simply refining a document on which there was general agreement, of seeing their task as the production of a more polished text. Indeed, this final phase of the committee's work saw the active continuation of the established process of consultation and reflection. Moreover this work was to be carried out in an atmosphere in which there was increasing public interest as the projected publication date drew nearer.

Three main strands within the committee's work can be identified in this latter phase: the need to respond to the concerns voiced by the hierarchy at the N.C.C.B. annual meeting; the continuing dialogue with the political community which had been exposed in the Clark letter and its reception; and the 'fraternal exchange' with other hierarchies who were themselves engaged in reflection on war and peace issues.

Responding to the Bishops:

Building Consensus in the Episcopal Conference

'The committee submits for our consideration the second draft of the pastoral letter, which is forty-eight typewritten pages longer than the first draft. We do have a very comprehensive treatment of the issues of war and peace. It is an acceptable working document...The committee is to be commended for its diligent efforts...my comments [are offered] in a sincere effort to stimulate discussion and debate, with the hope of perfecting the pastoral letter as an educative instrument and as a guide for all peace-loving people.'(66)

Thus Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia summed up his reaction to the second draft in a speech to the N.C.C.B. Annual meeting. His

judgment on the draft catches the mood of many of the interventions at that meeting, one of welcome for the draft, of praise for the committee tempered by specific concerns which, it was hoped, the ad hoc committee would respond to.

This response to the draft set gave the committee its next task. Although the level of validation which the bishops had given the draft pastoral was high, a wide-range of specific concerns had been voiced. The pattern of consultation adopted by the ad hoc committee now raised the legitimate expectation that the next draft would reflect those expressed concerns and hesitations within the framework of the hierarchy's generally supportive attitude. The production of a final text would signal the end of the process as far as the ad hoc committee was concerned. How were the contributions made at the meeting to be assimilated?

At its first meeting of 1983 the Bernardin committee identified those concerns which had emerged from the plenary session in November. As Castelli lists them they seemed to cover all the major sections of the draft Pastoral.(67) On the explicitly theological front there was the need for the new draft to be attentive to concern about the use of scripture, and the need for greater elaboration of the relationship between pacifism and the just war tradition. In terms of presentation and style there was the question of how specific the document should be, an issue which related to the letter's moral authority. In politico-strategic terms there was the need to attend to the question of legitimate self-defence, to develop more fully the political judgment on the respective merits of American and Soviet society, and finally there was the need to issue clearer guidelines for the document's implementation. In addition to these issues it would seem that Bernardin recognized deterrence as the most urgent and complex subject for the committee.(68)

The strategy adopted by the committee was to delegate tasks to individual members and to employ outside expertise when required. Thus Casey was to liaise on the section dealing with the use of scripture with Bishop Skilba who had identified this need in the

course of the November meeting. Other matters were to be handled in-house. Interestingly, the section on deterrence was given over to the staff members, Hehir, Doherty and Russett. O'Connor was to address the relationship of the just war tradition to pacifism, while Russett worked on the superpower relations, Reilly and Fulcher on the Pastoral's implementation and Gumbleton on strategies for peace.

This method of working saw the exacerbation of existing differences of view within the committee itself, and the hard task of building a true consensus. At its meeting in February the work done by individuals was received, and this tension was immediately apparent. Although the reworking of the section on deterrence had been assigned to the staff members, both O'Connor and Gumbleton came not simply with amendments, but with completely new drafts.

O'Connor's draft ran to some forty-seven pages, and in addition to the points of substance raised is interesting for what it reveals of his understanding of the process at work. In a covering letter to Bernardin he wrote:

It essentially reflects the position that in conscience I believe we must take. As always, I hope I am completely open to discussion and improvement. In integrity, however, I am not sure that I can deviate far from the basic position I attempt to express herein. And in honesty I must observe that I believe the format, structure and style of the enclosure better suit the issues treated than does the section in the Second Draft as currently presented.'(69)

At this point a word of caution must be offered. Castelli in his treatment of the process regards O'Connor as a rogue influence within the committee, and describes graphically the way in which the committee was forced to accommodate his views. Castelli believes that he was allowed a contribution in excess of the constituency he represented within the hierarchy. Whether or not the truth of that can be demonstrated, this phase in the committee's life does seem to show most clearly the difficulties inherent in seeking as specific a document as possible while also seeking unanimity of voice from the committee. At this point,

Castelli claims, the committee came closest to impasse as that search for unanimity seemed threatened.(70)

Whether threats of dissent or resignation can be seen as the unavoidable features of the building of consensus and indeed as the legitimate application of pressure by a member of the committee on the rest of the membership, this phase continues to demonstrate that the task of the committee remained not only one of response to the voices within the hierarchy, but also one of accommodating the divergent views within the committee itself. Inasmuch as the formation of the committee was determined by the desire to have it in some fashion represent the diversity of the hierarchy as a whole, the inner discussions at this time were a legitimate and necessary stage. However, the members faced the realization that the nearer the date of publication for the final draft, the greater the difficulty of achieving the unanimity of which Laghi had spoken would prove.

The urge towards unanimity remained a key factor, opening the committee members to the need for compromise with one another. As Castelli sketches this phase of the committee's life he makes this judgment:

'As the bishops continued to grapple with their day-to-day responsibilities, the long committee process became a drain. The further away the committee got from November, the more it seemed to become a world of its own, more and more isolated from the consensus the bishops had shown in November and more and more absorbed within the committee itself. Within this framework, the need to keep O'Connor within a consensus assumed a far greater proportion than the influence of O'Connor...within the whole conference would merit.'(71)

If Castelli is correct in this judgment this phase would show that the dynamics of the process, and, in particular the desire to produce a document which carried the validation of all the committee members, worked against the committee's continuing to be responsive to outside influence, legitimate or illegitimate, and gave a higher priority to achieving a unified voice within the committee itself. Thus the deviant voice of O'Connor had at

this stage an impact far in excess either of the constituency he represented or of the force of the argument he proposed.

Yet in the emergence of the final draft the significance of the deviant voice is muted. O'Connor's resistance to the second draft's treatment of the nuclear freeze and his determination to weaken the Letter's nuanced endorsement of it was successful - at least until the hierarchy debated the text in May. However, the caution he displayed over a document which he regarded as too specific did not give the tone to the final draft. It is possible to identify parts of the final text which emerged from O'Connor and are out of sympathy with its overall tone, but the substantial changes within the text had already been identified as arising out of the discussion in November 1982 and the Consultation which took place in Rome in January 1983, and which we shall consider later.

Reflecting the areas of unease which Bernardin had identified in January, there were substantial reworkings of the scriptural section with elaboration of the distinction between earthly peace and eschatological peace, and further attention to the Old Testament tradition of God as a warrior. Whereas the theological section in the second draft had begun with the nonviolent tradition, the new draft began with an assertion of the nation's right to self-defence. The section on the just war now included a disquisition on the nature of 'comparative justice'.⁽⁷²⁾ The presentation on deterrence would seem to have owed more to the Rome Consultation, especially in the section on 'The Initiation of Nuclear War' which was attentive to the distinction between differing levels of moral authority. A major change in the section on pastoral practice saw greater attention to 'reverence for life' which in essence linked the bishops' stance on nuclear weapons to an attack on abortion. It specifically chided those who were swift to follow the bishops on peace issues while being reluctant to do so on abortion.

Responding to the Public Agenda:

Consensus and Conflict

'Any candidate running for election in the fall of 1982 noticed that a new issue had joined the list of topics that was certain to come up at any candidates' night. It did not matter if you were running for local, state, or federal office. On every talk show, and in every forum in which candidates sought to get their message across, they had to have a position on the nuclear weapons freeze...In the long run, arms control can only benefit from the added attention. Tocqueville explains this point best in Democracy in America. Admitting that our democratic system is often 'clumsy', he adds that

"it does what the most skillful government cannot do; it spreads throughout the body social a restless activity, a super-abundant force, and energy never found elsewhere, which, however little favoured by circumstances, can do wonders." '(73)

Edward Feighan, a Democrat member of the House of Representatives reminds us that when we consider the impact made on the third draft as a result of contact between the committee and members of the Reagan administration, it is important to see both bishops and politicians as operating in the context of the agenda set by public opinion, an agenda which throughout the drafting process was dominated by the Nuclear Freeze debate.

This initiative which began in 1979 developed into a highly successful public campaign. Detached from party politics it had a particular appeal to religious and professional groups. In California, where the movement began, the Catholic church, especially in the northern dioceses of San Francisco and Stockton gave it its backing and the support of Archbishop Quinn was particularly vocal.(74)

Against the background of the failure of SALT II, the freeze's tactic was to promote a simple, easily understood measure of arms control which could find backing from ordinary citizens at every level of American political culture. Its exponents succeeded in

building a broad spectrum of support, and by the time of the preparatory phase of the third draft it had given rise to a national debate focused on Congress.

For many within the freeze movement the second draft had caught the mood of their concern, and that was reflected in an extreme edginess in the Reagan administration about the direction the bishops seemed to be taking.

It may be argued that the administration's response to the bishops lacked political finesse, but the media coverage of the Clark letter made the public aware of heightened tension between the drafting committee and the policy-makers.

What contact did the drafting committee have with the administration? On December 21st Hehir and Russett met with "staff level" members of the Reagan administration to discuss US strategic targeting. In the following month, in advance of the meeting in Rome, the committee as a whole met with officials at the State Department. At Foggy Bottom the discussion turned to U.S. targeting doctrine, while Bernardin used the opportunity to seek clarification of those matters which the Clark letter had claimed the bishops had failed to understand. The administration officials included on that occasion Robert McFarlane, deputy assistant to the President on national security affairs, Joseph Lehman of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and Ronald Lehman of the Defense Department.

What impact did these contacts have? Is it legitimate to see in some of the textual changes the direct result of administration pressure, and if not, did these contacts have any real value? Here once more the issue goes to the heart of the dilemma of any consultative process.

Once discreet consultation designed to inform and animate engagement with the task moves to semi-public confrontation in which challenge replaces mutual learning, textual changes come to be seen increasingly as the result of pressure brought to bear on

the drafters rather than as a result of their legitimate learning. This can be seen most graphically in the way in which the media interpreted the changes in that part of the draft pastoral which had bearing on the nuclear freeze.

In general the new draft was characterized by the same orientation as the second, but crucially for political commentators and for the Administration it offered a less specific and therefore arguably a softer analysis in key areas. The crisp prohibition of the first use of nuclear weapons in the second draft was blunted by the acceptance of its theoretical possibility.(75) In a reflection on the final text Bernardin said of the thinking behind this section:

'The pastoral opposes the first use of nuclear weapons and supports a "no first use pledge" ...The letter explicitly acknowledges that it will take time to implement such a policy. It also acknowledges certain objections to a "no first use" pledge. Hence this assessment does not have the same absolute character as the counterpopulation section: we have made prudential judgments, and we are aware that people can and will draw other conclusions based on a different reading of the factual data.'(76)

The gloss given by Bernardin has strong echoes of the concerns raised at the Rome Consultation.(77) There seems little need to look further for the origin of this change of tone, and it would be difficult to argue that Administration pressure or force of argument had carried the day. The Administration's policy had been set out some time before in a letter from U.S. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to Bernardin in 1982.(78)

The second textual change which excited much comment was one which affected the perceived attitude to the Nuclear Freeze Initiative. The text in the second draft had read:

'In support of the concept of "sufficiency" as an adequate deterrent and in light of the present size and composition of both the US and Soviet strategic arsenals, we recommend: 1. Support for immediate, bilateral verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new strategic systems...' (79)

The text of the new draft saw 'halt' changed to 'curb'. The

significance of this change may seem arcane. Archbishop Roach made probably the most trenchant comment when he expressed the view in a talk in his diocese that this textual change smacked of 'a little too much horse-trading' within the committee.(80) Public presentation however seized on this relatively slender evidence to argue that the bishops had softened their criticism of Administration policy in the period between the second and third drafts, and were now explicitly disavowing the freeze movement.

It was the imminence of the vote on the freeze in Congress which led to such careful scrutiny of the text. Suspicions of the Administration's influence on the new draft were heightened at a disastrous press conference when Bernardin described it as more 'flexible', and said that the committee had been 'sensitive' to the Reagan administration. This combined with a more astute reaction to the draft by the Administration evoked from Bernardin and Roach a two-page statement published on April 10th, which emphasised that there had been no retreat:

'We could not accept any suggestion that there are relatively few and insignificant differences between US policies and the policies advocated in the pastoral... Without wishing to be ungracious to administration spokesmen, we think it is important to note some of the areas in which the third draft takes stands significantly at variance with current US policy. These include, for example, advocacy of a policy of 'no first use' of nuclear weapons and support for early and successful conclusion of negotiations on the comprehensive test ban treaty...The basic moral judgment of the document is, we believe, summed up in these two sentences: 'A justifiable use of force must be both discriminatory and proportionate. Certain aspects of both US and Soviet strategies fail both tests...' In sum, we welcome reactions to the third draft of the pastoral letter from administration spokesmen and all other interested parties. This exchange of views has been integral to the evolution of the document to date. Come May 2 and 3, however, the decision will now rest with the bishops and only with them.'(81)

The public's concentration on the nuclear freeze and the rather defensive reactive statements which Roach and Bernardin felt themselves called upon to make, have in one sense little to do with the relationship between the bishops and the Reagan

administration. What this alerts us to is the distorting effect which media interest had upon this part of the process, its fascination with any suspected conflict and the heightened expectation which surrounds a document prepared against a political background dominated by a single issue. In the strict sense this has less to do with relations between the bishops and the White House than with American media culture.

Bernardin suggests very strongly that the main contribution of the Administration came in the earliest phases, the 'listening' phase and that thereafter the debate was coloured by its ecclesial context. In sum, in terms of process this phase reveals the imbalance created by the urge to complete the task and the consequent need for compromise, and the blunt reality of public perception formed by the media and all too ready to see conflict and tension. The conflicts were there, but the interesting question was how the bishops would form a consensus at the May meeting in Chicago, rather than whether the bishops had become agents of or agents opposed to the detail of government policy.

Responding in Public:
Consensus-building and the Press

The public interest which surrounded the November meeting and the increasing attention paid by the American news media to the committee's work was in itself a factor in this last phase of the task. The process, or at least that part of it which was reckoned newsworthy, was now more exposed. What modifying impact would such exposure have?

Russell Shaw, the Secretary for Public Affairs of the U.S.C.C., wrote in December 1982:

'The media are not writing the bishops' pastoral but almost certainly they are influencing - indeed already have influenced - how the pastoral will ultimately be received by Catholics and others.'(82)

Shaw's article suggested ways in which that influence could be seen, and offered a judgement on whether or not it was appropriate, but it remains a difficult element to describe and evaluate.

At a press conference before the special meeting of the American archbishops in Rome in March 1989 Bernardin offered this judgment on America's distinctive media culture as it impinges on the church:

'We proclaim the Gospel in a communications-oriented society in a world that has become ever smaller. Because of the freedom of speech and the freedom of press inherent in our society, and because of the importance accorded to the church within the United States by our fellow Americans, discussions that at one time might have been considered intramural have significant repercussions throughout the world. We work out our destiny in full view of the public's eye. This is an element of our ministry that we are not always able to control. Perhaps this is a special blessing of our experience - although some would see it as a mixed blessing.'(83)

At one level the simple reporting of the process by media outlets other than established Catholic channels allowed the diffusion of the bishops' thinking to a wider public, and in the text of the

second draft the committee addressed the 'men and women of the media':

'We have directly felt our dependence upon you in writing this letter; all the problems we have confronted have been analyzed daily in the media. As we have grappled with these issues, we have experienced some of the responsibility you bear for interpreting them. The quality of your efforts determines in great measure the opportunity the general public has for understanding the world of our time.(84)

By the time the final text was published the bishops were more modest about the journalists' task. They were no longer charged with the responsibility of conscientizing the general public on issue of world-wide import, but simply of helping it understand the Pastoral.

Whether that textual change is of real significance is questionable, but in the period from December 1982 to May 1983 the role of the media as formers of, as well as reflectors of, the debate, had developed a sharper tone. The mood within the U.S.C.C., if Shaw's article can be taken as any indication, was wary, and the measure of his criticism can be gauged from his remarks on those within the media who were the tools of opposition to the bishops' task.

'Not everything is fair in a media controversy like the one surrounding the pastoral. It is fair for media to report the views of critics and pressure groups. It is also fair for media to take sides in their editorials and commentary. But it is not fair for them to engage in journalistic terrorism and employ factual misstatements and sensational allegations to undermine the bishops' credibility'.(85)

Apart from being a demonstration of the sensitivity of Shaw to the damaging effect of hostile coverage by the American media, his article raises the question of whether the heightened public interest in the process was the result of interest in the issues the bishops were seeking to address, or rather in the spectacle of the process itself.

Was a process, which as we have seen was complex and nuanced, patient of journalistic treatment? Shaw asked

'...can the bishops next May live up to their notices and deliver everything that many journalists are looking for?

Is it prudent for them to try?(86)

Further, would media treatment so stress the conflict which the Pastoral's teaching implied between the hierarchy and Administration policy that only those parts of the Pastoral which dealt with concrete policy would be reported, while its overall argument was ignored? The Letter's lasting validity would then be diminished. This fear is one shared by more conservative voices within the Catholic community, those like George Weigel who feared that the specificity of the teaching tied the Pastoral into one time frame, and therefore urged a more timeless style analogous to that employed in papal documents. Shaw presumably would not have supported that view, but his opinion on the media influence misses the point that the very specificity of the bishops' letter deliberately linked it to the contemporary world, and rightly so, for the 'signs of the times' demanded specific response which was not afraid of inbuilt obsolescence.(87) The nervousness he displayed does draw attention to the risk that the bishops had taken in deciding to make their teaching specific and to offer it as one element in a more general debate. The search to build a wide consensus of opinion would require toughness as well as truth.

The process of reception had then already begun, even as the final text was still emerging. The playing out of this final phase in the Pastoral's preparation demonstrated that the bishops could not remain in control of the way in which their teaching would be reported in advance of its final publication. The bishops, as we shall see, had proved adept at mobilizing the resources of the press at the time of the Rome Consultation, diluting the impact of the 'official' memo by the simultaneous release of a text from Bernardin. Yet, as Castelli shows, the careful work on the text of the Pastoral, that care dictated by the need to build consensus within the hierarchy, was uncongenial to the interests of most journalists. Whether the exposure of the tensions within the drafting committee and the hierarchy to public scrutiny did the Pastoral's preparation any damage is doubtful. It could be said that the exposure of how consensus is

achieved within the church is one of the strengths of the process which the drafting committee developed. When the diversity of opinion among the bishops was exposed it may have been painful to those unused to such attention, but it did not weaken the teaching. It was the inescapable fate of a church committed to a more open style of learning as part of its teaching vocation.

Responding in Rome:

Towards a Catholic Consensus

On 18th and 19th January 1983, shortly after Pope John Paul II had elevated Joseph Bernardin to the College of Cardinals, an elevation which signalled to Vatican watchers a validation of the work of the American bishops' committee on the Pastoral which he chaired, an 'informal consultation' was held in Rome.

'...common dialogue is an expression of episcopal collegiality, and by reason of the interdependence of nations and churches in these grave matters, it is normal that a great communion of thought should be established between the episcopal conferences and with the Holy See in order to provide guidance along the path to peace for the people of God and all people of good will.'(88)

Thus ran part of the communique issued by the Vatican Press Office at the conclusion of the Informal Consultation in Rome in January 1983. This phase in the Pastoral's development touches on the wider ecclesial dimension of the American bishops' engagement in their teaching ministry, which will be considered later. The meeting tells us much about key elements in the debate about the role of episcopal conferences and how different the response of the various hierarchies was to the nuclear question.

Our concern here is the impact of the meeting in Rome on the development of The Challenge of Peace.

There is no doubt that it was a significant occasion. Was it in essence the calling of an errant hierarchy to heel, as some of the draft pastoral's opponents hoped?(89) Was it an exchange of views which allowed the parties the freedom to develop further their thinking within the broad parameters of church teaching, or was it a modifying exchange which had immediate impact upon the preparation of the new draft? George Weigel is in no doubt.(90) He sees it as exercising a 'moderating' influence, with its origin in the Vatican's concern with the American bishops' work, and argues that it played a 'crucial' part in the pattern of preparation, and was 'decisive' in shaping the final text. Is such a view justified?

The memorandum prepared by Fr. Jan Schotte of the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace is the main source of information about the content of the discussion, and it identified five main themes which underlay the discussion.(91)

First, there was reference to the contested teaching authority of an episcopal conference. The importance of this is not only ecclesial. By pointing to the debate in Rome over the authority which the document enjoyed, conservative American opponents of the document's content could claim high ecclesial warrant for their position without troubling to argue the case. If the bishops had no mandate to teach, the church and the world which they addressed had no obligation to listen. Such a crude reading of the text may not have been widely canvassed, but it did expose the drafting committee to yet another complicating element in the drive towards a completed document.

Secondly, there was the issue of the application of moral principles to the nuclear weapons debate. Part of the concern expressed in Rome targeted a certain 'imprecision' in the document which made it difficult for those addressed to distinguish between differing levels of authority within it, in particular when morally binding moral principles were stated and when non-binding prudential judgments were proposed. It is manifest that this criticism led to a substantial alteration of

the text of the third draft which began by making this distinction clear. The impact was not simply one of the clearer setting out of ground rules, however. Weigel argues that out of this clarification came a rethinking of the presentation on the first use of nuclear weapons by NATO.(92)

The third area of concern was the use of scripture, a theme which the American participants had already undertaken to review. The burden of the argument in Rome was that there was a need to distinguish more sharply between realized and eschatological peace. This review of the use of scripture had already been given a high profile after the January committee meeting.

The fourth 'theme' was that of the relationship of pacifist witness to the just war tradition. Both the first and second drafts had proposed that these were parallel or equivalent traditions within Catholic Christianity. The Schotte memo suggests a vigorous defence of the just war tradition as the tradition of the church.

But it was the fifth element, that of the draft's treatment of deterrence, which provides the greatest interest in estimating the Consultation's outcome on content. After the November meeting Bernardin had indicated to his committee the complexity of this task, and as Schotte reports:

'some participants suggested that this is one of the more difficult questions placed before the moral judgment of pastors and faithful'.(93)

The general points which followed were all present in the text of the draft. Thus, deterrence had to be seen in the wider context of geopolitics; its evaluation should be sensitive to the distinction between actual and probable threats of aggression, and such evaluation should not be separated from moral considerations, prudential judgments on military and political facts and an awareness of its psychological impact.

That such a descriptive survey of some of the tasks facing any analysis of deterrence should have been rehearsed at all is surprising, for the American bishops had addressed this at length in their draft Pastoral.

It was what followed this general sketch of the problem which reveals the real heart of the Consultation's importance. The Schotte memo suggests, albeit indirectly, that in the face of these complexities all the participants turned with relief to the guidance offered by the Pope at the Second Special Session on Disarmament of the U.N. General Assembly of June 1982. Indeed, the suggestion that papal reflection on the matter was the key source of wisdom was strengthened by the 'personal commentary' offered by Cardinal Casaroli on that Message, ostensibly at the request of the meeting. There is more than a flavour of 'Roma locuta est: causa finita est' in the way the Schotte text describes this, which is all the more surprising since the papal text was lengthy and highly discursive, and the part of it devoted to deterrence as such is very slight.⁽⁹⁴⁾ Nevertheless, the Pope's judgement on the matter quickly assumed a high international profile and Casaroli's exegesis, which although not an authorized interpretation was one offered 'on the basis of his knowledge of the text and the context of that Message', had an important role in the Consultation.

The nub of that contribution was to question whether the draft paid sufficient regard to the need to hold two things in tension: on the one hand the danger of nuclear conflict, on the other the 'endangering of the independence and freedom of entire peoples' which, in the West, took shape in 'fear...of the imposition of an ideology and of a 'socialist' regime'.

Casaroli in essence posed the question as to whether these factors were of equal importance, and if not, which was given the greater weight. The rather gnomic and indirect language of the memo means that we must exercise care in interpreting it, but Weigel is surely right to see in this a concern that the draft paid insufficient attention to the relationship between nuclear

war and the threat of totalitarianism, with its implied criticism that the American bishops had paid insufficient attention to the character of Soviet power and policy. This was reinforced by the penultimate of Casaroli's points, that

'one must not give the impression that moral principles are to be affirmed (even with explicit condemnations) for one side, while forgetting as it were that these same principles have universal value and applicability (i.e. for all sides).'

 (95)

If Casaroli argued that the draft was insufficiently alive to the Soviet ideological and military threat, it would seem he believed that the draft was too alive to the failures of American policy. It was not that he argued simply for more even-handedness, but rather that he suggested there be a discrimination in favour of its own culture by the American hierarchy:

'One must not give the impression that the Church does not take sufficiently into account the magnitude of the problems and the seriousness of the tremendous responsibilities of government authorities who have to make decisions in these matters. This does not mean that the Church cannot and must not clearly enunciate the certain and seriously obligatory moral principles that the authorities themselves must keep in mind and follow. This must be done, however, in such a manner that it helps those authorities to get a correct orientation according to the principles of human and Christian morals and not to create even greater difficulties for them in an area so enormously difficult and so full of responsibility. The same observations apply also to public opinion.'

 (96)

This seems an extraordinary statement. It says little about deterrence. What it does set out is an understanding of the public policy role of the American church as one which acts as advocate for the American political regime by virtue of its anti-Soviet stance, and further that this political reality should be accorded priority over any criticism of American policy.

As we saw earlier the American bishops had only recently abandoned a tradition of lending automatic support to the foreign policy goals of the United States as those were set by government. That break had been slow and painful. The final draft would include statements of patriotic support for American

values and accompanying denials of the moral equivalence of the superpowers, but they remain incidental to the Pastoral's overall argument. Here it is clear that Casaroli and the American hierarchy were interested in different questions. As Secretary of State and architect of the Vatican's policy of 'Ostpolitik' Casaroli had a different perspective on the mutual relations between the superpowers and on the European theatre from that of the Americans. Not that Casaroli was ignorant of the particular features which made American religious life distinct from that represented by the other hierarchies at the Consultation. What might seem at first reading to be a call to the Americans to return to the now defunct Catholic nationalism of the past was little more than a summons to bear in mind the wider ideological terrain in which the question of nuclear war was only one feature. Joseph Gremillion, a veteran observer of the justice and peace concerns of the church, strengthens this reading of Casaroli's statement by drawing attention to the scope of the American pastoral which he calls 'encyclical-like', extending beyond national borders into the global sphere as far as that area reserved to the Pope.⁽⁹⁷⁾ If the American bishops defended their moral judgements by drawing attention to the global context of their country's military policy, Casaroli was reminding them of the ideological contours of that context.

Estimating the impact of the Consultation on the emergence of the third draft is necessarily an inexact science. It is worth stressing again that the Schotte memo, although the most widely available account of the meeting, is not a verbatim report but a 'staff report', albeit one which Schotte describes as 'a point of reference and a guide to the U.S. bishops in preparing the next draft of their pastoral letter'. It tells us little about the experience of the Consultation, the impact made by the unreported parts of the 'inspiring expression of episcopal collegiality'. Nevertheless, even if it does not capture the totality of the 'fraternal exchange' it is an important document, and it is reasonable to examine the text of the third draft in order to identify themes which the meeting in Rome had developed without committing ourselves to a straight causal link.

Statements of Pope John Paul II were more frequently cited in the third draft than in earlier ones, although in most cases they are illustrative rather than definitive. The exception is the papal judgment on deterrence which was contained in the statement to the U.N. Special Session on Disarmament. The draft's treatment of this key passage is in line with the contributions of Cardinal Casaroli to the Consultation, and is intimately linked to the draft's according deterrence a 'strictly conditioned moral acceptance'. This marked an important shift from the language of the second draft.

There was a much more explicit treatment of the differing levels of authority which obtained within the document. A clearer statement on the Soviet Union, the argument that pacifism was not an option for governments but only for individuals, and the connecting of a no-first-use pledge to the balance of conventional force balances in Europe, all reflected discussions as minuted in the Schotte memo.

As we saw earlier, much of this thinking had already surfaced at the November meeting of the N.C.C.B. What is surely safe to assert is that the Rome Consultation had a confirming effect in prioritizing the concerns raised elsewhere. It is going too far, however, to see the Rome meeting as one which set the boundaries for the final debate as Weigel suggests. Boundaries were set out at that meeting, but were more obvious in their impact on ecclesial demarcation than in the argument of the Pastoral.(98)

The Chicago Meeting: Consensus Achieved

The final drama of the process was played out at a special meeting of the hierarchy in Chicago on May 2/3 1983. Far from being the occasion of a purely ritual endorsement of the third draft, the meeting continued the process begun so many months before, with the bishops debating the text and altering it in significant ways. By the end of the meeting the text of 'The Challenge of Peace' was given the validation of the hierarchy by 283 votes to 9, a display of support impressive even in the context of a community which sets great store by unanimity.

The course of the meeting is described by Castelli with considerable brio.(99) There had grown up a public perception that the committee had softened its tone in its judgement on American strategic policy. In the context of the highly-charged nuclear freeze debate, Bernardin's public comments had already encouraged a view that the bishops had retreated in the face of Administration pressure. This idea, fostered by trenchant and vocal critics, seems to have stiffened the resolve of the bishops. Of more than five hundred amendments proposed by individual bishops, the majority were designed to redress the balance. The account of the meeting which Castelli outlines, and which is sustained by the material in Origins, makes clear features which had lain below the surface of the process from the outset.

By the end of the Chicago meeting the bishops had given the new text a level of validation which outstripped Bernardin's expectations. Moreover the text had been strengthened in several regards:

'As the afternoon went on, the sophisticated pattern of the bishops' voting became clear - they approved virtually everything that strengthened the document, while consistently stopping short of saying there was no conceivable situation in which the use of nuclear weapons could be morally justified. They rejected efforts which would have either given the document a more pacifist tone or given any suggestion for using nuclear weapons.'(100)

What does this last phase of the bishops' engagement in the task of addressing the issues of war and peace reveal? How did the bishops

'despite being as politically fragmented as the Democratic party, [come] to adopt by near unanimity a very progressive document?'(101)

The answer to those questions will lead us again into what it means to build consensus.

Castelli's argument in brief is that the control over the shape of the Chicago meeting guaranteed the outcome. His prime analogy is that of the working of a parliamentary process.

The procedure which the bishops adopted in dealing with the great number of suggested amendments was one which gave considerable control to the bishop presiding over the discussion. The grouping of amendments and the way in which they were to be dealt with followed a procedure which had been developed by Mgr. Daniel Hoye,(102) and by dealing with the most significant issues at the outset drew on wisdom from Bishop McManus who had shepherded the progress of the National Catechetical Directory and a pastoral letter on education through bishops' meetings.

'By Monday's end, the bishops' position was strong and clear. McManus' strategy appeared more brilliant than ever: it had gotten 'curb-halt' up-front in a weathervane vote. By the time the bishops had voted on [the] first amendment, the direction and fate of the document were sealed.'(103)

Tight control over the procedure had the effect, in Castelli's view, of strengthening the hand of the 'liberal' element in the hierarchy which proved more adept at using the parliamentary-style procedure than its conservative critics. Hanson develops this theme, suggesting that effective power within the US hierarchy lay at this time with what he calls 'establishment liberalism'.(104) He uses this term to describe the identity of purpose which many of the prime movers within the hierarchy shared with the liberal wing of the Democratic Party.

A group of archbishops including Roach, Quinn, Bernardin, Hickey, May, Weakland and Malone are key representatives of what he regards as the 'dynamic new leadership' of American Catholicism. Elected by their fellow bishops to important national posts, many of them shared what Hanson regards as the major concerns of Democratic liberals, and of those Quinn and Hickey in particular played a prominent role in the Chicago meeting. The arguments they proposed elicited a response born of respect for their acknowledged role within the hierarchy, while their occupation of high-profile leadership positions gave them a mastery of the process at this crucial final stage.

The winning of the argument by the 'establishment liberals' and their effectiveness as operators within the consultative machinery was augmented by their distinctiveness from the radical voices of bishops such as Leroy Matthiessen and Hunthausen, heirs of the Catholic protest tradition of the 1960's. This latter group is represented most clearly in the Pax Christi lobby which was sufficiently large, some 57 in the autumn of 1982, to be a powerful caucus within the church. All the bishops shared a desire for unity, and a unity that was publicly visible. This, in a curious way, overrode conservative anxieties about the Pastoral, for they were more fearful of the consequences of public dissent by the Pax Christi group if the final text marked a retreat from the specific commitments of the third draft than were the radicals, who were well-used to being in the eye of public storm. Moreover, the conservatives were assuaged by the clear assertion within the document of the different levels of authority, which offered them scope for developing their own gloss.

The way in which Castelli and Hanson describe the Chicago meeting is persuasive, and helps us understand the tactical coalition of interest which led to the high level of episcopal support for the final draft of 'The Challenge of Peace'. It also leads us to reflect on themes which have recurred throughout this presentation of the process which led to that happy conclusion.

CONCLUSION

TOWARDS A PASTORAL MAGISTERIUM? :

Consultation, Convergence and Consensus in the Process of 'The Challenge of Peace'

This section has sought to outline the process which led to the issuing of The Challenge of Peace in May 1983, in the belief that the process itself made a substantial contribution to the way in which we understand the task of the church as a teaching agent. It has been the intention to suggest that the process adopted by the ad hoc committee from its inception to the vote on the final draft not only made possible the promotion of a teaching document which benefited from wide consultation and generous reflection, but that the very process showed a new and distinctive way of engaging in the task of teaching. The importance of the process, in other words, is not subsumed in the product. Indeed, the process continues, inasmuch as the implementation strategy contained within the Letter continues to animate discussion on nuclear questions, while the experience of the Pastoral's preparation has changed the American Catholic community's understanding of what the teaching church can be.

One of the most remarkable features of this change was the N.C.C.B.'s readiness, within less than three years of the issuing of The Challenge of Peace, to establish an Ad Hoc Committee for the Moral Evaluation of Deterrence. The committee's task was to assess whether the conditions elaborated in the Pastoral for its 'strictly conditioned moral acceptance' of deterrence were being met.

When the bishops approved the committee's statement Report on 'The Challenge of Peace' and Policy Developments 1983-1988 (105) they also issued a Pastoral Reflection (106). In it they stressed that the

'peace pastoral was not some passing preoccupation or brief phase in the church's life. It represents an ongoing

commitment to weave concern for these matters into the fabric of Catholic life'

While recognizing that too many of their people remained unaware of the letter they refer to the way it had

'launched an unprecedented process of prayer, preaching, education, reflection, discussion and action.'

They are also humble enough to admit that this sustained process was not foreseen:

'When we began to write our letter, we had no idea of the attention and activity it would generate'.

Perhaps most importantly this continuing process was not limited to the church, an intramural sequence of education and debate.

The wider aim of the Pastoral was still to the fore:

'As pastors and believers, we are required by the Gospel to do far more than to develop a pastoral letter and initiate efforts to begin to educate and act on the church's teaching... A church of peacemaking is a community which speaks and acts for peace, a community which consistently raises fundamental moral questions about the policies that guide the arsenals of the world. As believers and citizens, we are called to use our voices and votes to support effective efforts to reverse the arms race and move towards genuine peace with justice.'

The bishops speak again of the need for 'respectful dialogue' and of how the argument of the case for peace needs not only conviction and competence but civility and charity.

The language which the bishops use to describe the process of reflection after the Pastoral's publication closely parallels that of the process which prepared it. There are three themes which flow through that process - consultation, convergence and consensus. I propose to examine the boundaries of each in turn as they affected the final text of the pastoral, keeping in mind the wider question as to whether the methodology which the bishops adopted makes it a role model for future teaching activity.

CONSULTATION

The consultative approach adopted by the Bernardin committee operated at a variety of levels.

Consultation with the World

There was in the establishment of formal hearings at which members of the Administration testified, a fascinating and bold initiative in preparing a teaching document. The most tempting parallel is the system of public hearings which are such a prominent feature of the way in which the U.S. Senate committees conduct their business. We may suspect that the bishops' committee lacked the high drama of some recent examples of Senate hearings, but in any case, the parallel is inexact. The hearings were private, and the details of the encounters are not in the public domain. Moreover, the Administration officials were not being called to account, but rather invited to give an account of current Administration policy and attitudes. At its most simple this level of consultation was designed to inform the committee members, and to focus their corporate mind on the contours of U.S. strategic policy.

This level of consultation was seen by the committee as the precursor of good teaching, necessary if the proposed document was to be specific and the bishops well-briefed in their judgments on American nuclear policy.

Consultation in search of learning was also the motive behind the committee's discussions with members of the arms control establishment. Prominent among the more liberal members of this group was McGeorge Bundy who joined with Robert McNamara, George Kennan and Gerard Smith in writing a highly influential article in Spring 1982 promoting a policy of no-first-use in Europe. Hanson concludes that the American pastoral benefited from the general critique of NATO strategy mounted by Bundy and others.(107) It was to this 'liberal' wing that the bishops

looked for strategic and technical expertise. The responsiveness of the committee to such views led them, ineluctably, into potential conflict with those hierarchies from the other NATO countries who were persuaded of the legitimacy of a nuclear response to Soviet conventional attack. (108)

Very quickly, learning led to the making of judgments, however provisional. While the detail of the contributions made by expert opinion remains private, the committee's contacts with the Administration became very exposed as the Administration saw in the drafts the promotion of an independent line on matters of policy.

It is the perils of consultation that we see in the public exchanges between the bishops and the Reagan administration, of which the best examples are the letters written to Bernardin by William Clark and Caspar Weinberger. The impact of these interventions on the emerging text is generally recognized as slight, while the style stiffened the resolve of the bishops not be seen as yielding to Administration pressure. Castelli describes the adversarial nature of these exchanges with great relish, and pictures the committee in defence of its legitimate autonomy from illegitimate political pressure. This latter account disguises two residual anxieties about the cost of contacts with the Administration in the consultative process.

First, it raises the question of how the Administration itself saw its part in the consultative process.(109) Clark in particular speaks in tones of surprised injury, that having shared the detailed rationale of U.S. strategic policy with the bishops, the committee should be so perverse as to evaluate it differently. Could the Administration have been in any doubt that the bishops would be at least agnostic about U.S. policy? In the context of the current public debate did they see the Catholic bishops as bearers of potential support? Or is it, rather, that the Administration could not afford to ignore the enterprise upon which the hierarchy had embarked, one which impinged so obviously on public concern?

Secondly, it demonstrates the complications contingent upon any consultative process. The Administration could not be expected to offer a dispassionate account of its own policy, nor act as a repository of pure information for the bishops to plunder. Bernardin was alert to the danger of engaging with the Reagan administration at too early a stage, and was adept at setting the limits of the encounter.

While there may have been little danger of the committee's emerging with a document which was an apologetic for U.S. policy, there was a danger that access to the detailed inner workings of the policy debate within the Administration could have fostered a chaplaincy role to the political elite. This is not to describe the place of the Catholic church in the United States as one which favoured that congruence of interest between political and ecclesiastical elites which exists, arguably, in the English context, where the role of the church as critic is often that of an 'insider' institution. It is simply to suggest that there is a potentially seductive game in which, at its crudest, the price of consultation is support or, more subtly, the yielding of initiative over the outlines of the public debate.

It was into this potentially hazardous territory that the Bernardin committee entered in its consultation with government officers. This was accepted as necessary if it were to have any voice in addressing the specifics of U.S. strategic policy. It ran the risk of collusion or selective silence. That it remained independent of these pressures, and was prepared to be resilient in the face of the vocal opposition of Catholic voices sympathetic to the Administration, was in large part due to the second major theme of the process, the search for consensus within the hierarchy.

Consultation in the Church

The second main arena of consultation, and one which was more determinant of the outcome, was that of the ecclesial community. It was here that the ecclesiological significance of the process is best seen, for it helped to clarify the issues which are at stake in the debates about collegiality and reception.

In the wider church's reaction to the process we gain fresh knowledge about the debate on how it understands its teaching vocation, and about the energy which has been released as regional or national groups of bishops have established a teaching role. One concern is at its centre. Is it desirable for there to be a pastoral teaching agency which operates at an intermediate level between the bishop in his diocese and the Holy See? That such an agency or range of agencies now exists is not in dispute, but the emergence of the regional or national voice within a church which sees itself as supranational awakens in some anxieties about the relative claims of unity and plurality. What legitimate expression can collegiality have, and what will be the consequence of different collegial bodies giving expression to different conclusions on a subject of universal concern? It is these ecclesiological questions which are exposed in a vivid way in the Rome Consultation in January 1983.

In defending the project entrusted to the Bernardin committee, the American hierarchy found itself also defending a crucial proposition: the church's right and responsibility to address societal issues at a national level.

An intermediary agent such as the American episcopal conference finds itself caught in an interpretative nexus. At one and the same time it voices the concerns of its own culture, responding to the 'signs of the times' as it perceives them, able and willing to engage in pastoral teaching on a national level and thus on a scale denied an individual bishop, and is also called

to be alive to the universal dimension of the Church's teaching vocation, alert to the teaching which emanates from Rome.

Those opposed to the character and specificity of The Challenge of Peace attacked the very right of the bishops to engage in this task. It is clear that the intermediary role is not simply one of information gathering and dissemination. The hesitations stem in part from the recognition that the engagement of a national hierarchy in teaching alters the context of all teaching and can even have what Gremillion describes as a global audience. It is this balance between the national and the universal, a national hierarchy and the Holy See, which is contentious. In a telling description of the role of a national conference, Bryan Hehir writes:

'The bishops' conferences and the Holy See seek to promote a universal moral and ecclesial framework to which all might appeal in arriving at their positions on particular issues.'(110)

Hehir outlines the case that while sharing these principles, episcopal conferences may arrive at different positions.

Thus, as we have seen, on the question of 'first use' of nuclear weapons the French, German and U.S. hierarchies may appeal to the same moral principles, yet arrive at differing contingent conclusions. Hehir supports the function of a shared framework which helps build a network of cooperation among national conferences on issues of global concern, but this leaves many tantalizing questions open. In the final analysis, that is in situations of conflict and dissent, who describes that universal moral and ecclesial framework which all agents find so helpful? Surely, in practice, it is the central organs of the church, the Holy See. How much freedom can the framework allow? Is it not subtly altered by each act of teaching which emerges from the intermediary agents? The simple fact of a multiplicity of voices addressing the same range of questions, and of one voice, the papal, addressing those same questions with frequency, argues for a much more flexible understanding of the contours of the permissible than has been the case. This is not to say that the

intermediary voice will necessarily be more radical than the central. What it does suggest is that the developing nature of the church's address to its teaching task may be increasingly inimical to the definitive and permanent, and correspondingly congenial to the contingent.

This may explain the readiness of a cautious voice like that of Avery Dulles to accord the intermediary agent a strong teaching role in pastoral, as distinct from dogmatic matters. (111)

Dulles advances his support for the view that Lumen Gentium proposed an understanding of catholicity in which each region contributed, through its special gifts, to other regions and to the whole church. In this vision the task of the Holy See is to protect legitimate differences, and to see to it that such differences do not hinder but contribute to unity.

'The Council did not suggest that different regional churches should profess different beliefs, but it insisted that the one faith ought to be proposed with different accents and nuances corresponding to the abilities, resources, and customs of each people and the variety of historical situations.' (112)

That vision may not have animated the Rome Consultation, but rather than seeing here the dead hand of the old age, we may in fact be witnessing the birth of a new ecclesiology. Nonetheless the initiative for change still remains with the 'spiritual shepherds'.

CONVERGENCE

If it is appropriate to describe the teaching activity of the American bishops as the exercise of a 'pastoral magisterium' what outlines does such a magisterium have and how does the process of the pastoral letter illuminate it?

A pastoral magisterium can be seen as one which is properly attentive to the society in which the church is placed. This allows the possibility of individual episcopal conferences developing a teaching style which is coloured by those elements in its own culture which are strong and distinctive. Although Dulles speaks of this in terms of a religious or spiritual heritage it is not necessary to be so restrictive. The church's task would be to address not only the individual conscience but also those questions and concerns which it regards as necessary for a nation's health, and to contribute to the debate in ways which are congenial to that society's image of how such a debate should be carried out. Thus for the development of a 'pastoral magisterium' in the United States the church requires to be in broad sympathy with common and generally shared perceptions of what makes that society distinctive. It may be that these self-images are emblematic rather than realized, but it seems that to speak of a 'pastoral' magisterium is to speak of a church which in its address to public issues adopts a style and method recognizably akin to that of its country's other public institutions. And more, it may be that it is precisely here that those who argue that there is a vacuum in the moral formation of public debate in contemporary American culture would see the 'pastoral' magisterium as having a prophetic character, reaffirming values and ideals which are at risk.

Such tantalizing possibilities aside, the development of a 'pastoral' magisterium demands that teaching depends for its effectiveness not only on its inner truth but on the free consent and response of the faithful, and the respectful response of the nation in general. It may imply that American culture is intrinsically inimical to the style of teaching which emanates

from Rome. It may imply also that an effective style of teaching must reflect the generally accepted norms of American traditions, and that at best Roman teaching requires reinterpretation if its inner argument is to be heard.

This is advanced, perhaps surprisingly, by Cardinal John O'Connor in an address to the special meeting at the Vatican in March 1989 of thirty-five American bishops and twenty-five Vatican officials.

'One hears it said, at times, that the Holy See does not understand the United States; hence that the Holy See does not appreciate the faith, the integrity and the loyalty of the bishops of the United States... in my judgment it would be helpful for the Holy See to recognise that frequently when American bishops are perceived as questioning the authority of the Holy See what they are really doing is trying to make things 'work' in our culture...'(113)

Yet O'Connor's submission gave little encouragement to the idea of teaching which emerged from the context of America and seemed mainly preoccupied with the appropriate method of implanting it in the American context.

John May, Archbishop of St. Louis, was a little more forthright in a news conference after the meeting:

'Many of the factors that make America distinctive are the ones that make her great - the freedom of thought and expression, the pluralism of cultures and religions, the democratic spirit which values the opinion of each individual. America is a "marketplace society", where ideas have to sell themselves on their own intrinsic merit. That this would conflict at times with the herarchical nature of the church is not surprising. What we came to Rome to say (and it was received calmly and well) was that this spirit of America must influence our own approach in the States. Though the teaching of the church is one and universal, our approach in presenting this teaching must be custom-fitted to the United States.'(114)

The Challenge of Peace can be seen as part of such a pastoral magisterium inasmuch as the bishops refused the crude conservative demand to offer the American people the statements of Pope John Paul II on the nuclear question in undiluted form, as if that alone would suffice. Nor was the final document simply a collection of papal and conciliar texts on war and peace

brought together with the benefit of commentary. Rather the final document was the outcome of the church's willingness to engage in dialogue, and to be open to voices outwith the narrow confines of the church. Moreover, the committee made it clear that the promotion of public debate was one of its chief aims, that the Pastoral crafted at least partly in public was offered as a contribution to that debate, not only in its final form but in its evolution and development.

The fundamental question arises as to whether this form of pastoral magisterium reflects a response to the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council, or if its evolution is a mirroring, perhaps even an aping, of American democratic culture? Is it legitimate to argue that, if we accept the notion of the episcopal conference as a mediating institution, the Catholic church in the United States should be allowed the freedom to respond to both?

Critics of this way of perceiving the magisterium might legitimately ask what was distinctive about the Catholic contribution? If a pastorally motivated magisterium reflects the culture it addresses, draws its style and tone from that culture and is alert to the assumptions and values of the society of which it is part, what marks the specifically Catholic contribution out as distinctive?

Bryan Hehir speaks of a 'science of policy analysis' which he ascribes to the bishops in their addressing public policy questions.(115) A key element in that 'science' is a commitment to arrive at prudential choice, and not to remain content with abstract admonition. Such prudential judgments derive from those moral principles which have the universal support of the church as they interact with empirical data in the light of the insight of faith. This 'science' defends a high regard for the specific and the researched. Critical to its development is what it tells us of its methodology. It demands consultation, and moreover a way of consulting which allows what Hehir calls the 'empirical data' to shape the judgments which are made.

How is such empirical data delivered? How broad a category is it, and is it accorded such value that it can lay siege to moral principles? Where data is defined as information on weapons-systems or targeting doctrine the issues are in all conscience sufficiently contentious. Does empirical data extend to such things as public mood, fears of war and the consequence of nuclear exchange? It would seem from the final document that it does. If so, what implication might this have on a range of socio-ethical issues such as abortion? This probably goes beyond what Hehir has in mind.

What characterises a pastoral magisterium is a recognition of the faith and life-experience of its secular context. It is perhaps the notable failure of the American church to offer such reflection and teaching during the Vietnam war that throws the current activity of the church into relief.

The distinctive feature of such a Catholic contribution to public reflection would then be the mix of attentiveness to those universal moral principles which animate all human discourse and to the empirical data.

The Vatican expressed a reluctance to see the bishops' contribution, the pastoral letter, reduced to one among many. presumably on the grounds that universal moral principles are not to be regarded as negotiable in debate. There are other dangers, notably the possibility that the bishops might have become the victims of a partisan attitude. The best guarantee against such a danger is not afforded by remaining aloof from the public debate, but lies precisely in the process which the bishops adopted in this instance. By exposing their thinking to a broad range of data and reflection, the bishops' committee established a way of listening which was in itself an example of how to engage in public debate. Inviting participation and engaging in dialogue, the bishops stimulated reflection on the nuclear issue, performing a teaching role by their method of learning even in advance of the formulation of their response.

CONSENSUS

The third theme identifiable throughout the process is that of consensus. It was a touchstone of the way in which Bernardin sought to develop the work of the committee, and it manifested itself in a number of ways.

There was the explicit need to offer at the end of the process a document which the committee members themselves would own. Dissent and conflict had to be allowed free rein within the committee's life, but there was to be no possibility of a minority report or indeed of any member's issuing disclaimers of responsibility. Given the heterogeneous nature of the committee's membership this was no simple task, and as we have seen, the role of John O'Connor highlights the difficulties.

At more subtle levels of the search for consensus within the process there was the need to keep within the bounds of the possible in seeking to develop a document which would be acceptable to the hierarchy as a whole. The hierarchy had given life to the committee; it was essential that it should acknowledge its work.

Consensus also characterized the way in which the committee's activity connected with the church as a whole. There was much talk of consensus at the Rome Consultation, a consensus which had little to do with compromise but much to do with the establishment of a common address within limits.

The drawing up of different parts of the document by individual members and by staff members: the testing of those contributions by debate: the drawing up of drafts which were designed to elicit response primarily from the bishops who had sponsored the project but also from interested voices outwith the hierarchy and outwith the church: the evaluation of reactions and the incorporation of new elements in the text: the exposure of the second draft to the scrutiny of other hierarchies: all were features of a consultative process which was designed to build consensus.

Pio Laghi, the Apostolic Pronuncio, had warned the bishops that the need to speak with one voice might properly lead to a document which was less specific than some might desire. Consensus here was seen as having a restraining effect on an adventurous or risky project but, in the event, the document was specific, detailed and nuanced, and was found by the overwhelming majority of the bishops to express their mind. The model of consensus-building within the process proved a fitting one in the production of a text which could carry that measure of episcopal support necessary to launch it with a proper level of endorsement. Consensus within the process was ably managed by Bernardin. It was matched by a consensus of view on the product. To understand why this was so leads us into the operation of the N.C.C.B. itself.

It is worth reminding ourselves how contentious were the issues which the bishops were addressing. In the context of a public policy debate which was bitter and divisive the bishops gave their support to a document which alarmed conservative lay Catholics and senior members of the Reagan administration. Were the bishops in general so open to the persuasiveness of the arguments that their support was established by good teaching or is there some dynamic at work within the hierarchy which suggested this could be assured?

Thomas Reese has examined the statements issued by the N.C.C.B./U.S.C.C. since Vatican II with an eye to the level of support each statement commanded. (116) Final votes at N.C.C.B. assemblies demonstrate a pattern of overwhelming support: of ninety four N.C.C.B./U.S.C.C. statements published as pastoral letters, all but nineteen were passed by voice vote or with ten or fewer bishops in opposition. On a range of issues which divided American society, and by extension the church community, the American bishops established a pattern of consensus which suggests that the formation and experience of consensus itself is highly-regarded and indeed is a norm in the operation of the hierarchy.

The consensus expressed in support of pastoral statements does not emerge simply out of deference for the committee's work, or from fear of public knowledge of the debate which is carried out before the final vote. In the case of The Challenge of Peace, however, conservative fears of the reaction of the Pax Christi caucus may have diminished their opposition. The evidence Reese puts forward suggests that the increasingly public nature of the bishops' deliberations has actually enhanced the seriousness of the debate, evidenced also in the number of amendments proposed.

However powerful a factor unanimity of voice may be within the church's perception of its teaching office, and however politically advantageous it may seem for the church to speak with one voice, the real significance of the consensus emerging in the level of validation for the outcome lies precisely within the process. In Reese's vivid language:

'Judging the NCCB/USCC only by the final vote on documents...would be like judging a restaurant by the food brought to your table. It would be an accurate judgment, but it would miss on the excitement that goes on in the kitchen.'(117)

This suggests that consensus is hard won and deliberately sought as well as being highly valued. The crafting of consensus is evidenced in a number of ways.

First, the pre-assembly process is critical to the formation of consensus. The way in which the ad hoc committee set about its task, the holding of hearings, the employment of U.S.C.C. staff, the preparation of drafts and the eliciting of response is an evolving strategy within the N.C.C.B., designed to maximise participation and support.

Secondly, the way in which the final assembly itself operates helps build consensus. It was under Bernardin's presidency in 1975 that the conference moved formally from procedures familiar to it from the Second Vatican Council to 'Robert's Rules of Order', from a conciliar to a legislature pattern. Both procedures could be employed to form consensus, but the latter

strengthened the assembly voice relative to the conference leadership and drafting committee. Far from stifling dissent, the rules of procedure followed since the early '70's gives it more scope, so that the process of reflection and reaction continues to the final vote.

Thirdly, the consensus within the N.C.C.B. has two constants. On the one hand, there is the felt need to refer and defer to church teaching, and on the other to be seen as responsive to the pastoral needs of the church. Analysis of amendments suggests to Reese that the assembly tends to accept those which strengthen the presentation of official teaching and to reject those which diminish pastoral concern. Thus consensus need not be the creature of either liberal or conservative caucuses but rather a recognition of the breadth of the task.

Fourthly, there are elements at work which can only be guessed at. A drafting committee can be deliberately cautious, seeking to build consensus by placating a 'conservative' constituency, and finding itself radicalized by the assembly. In the preparation of the final draft a committee can anticipate the desires of the assembly as part of a conflict avoidance strategy. There can also be at work a strong shared need for there to be congruence of thought between drafters and sponsors.

None of this diminishes the radical impact which 'The Challenge of Peace' made. Observing the creation of the consensus which produced it does not detract from the courageous way in which the bishops sought to turn their collegial into a genuinely public consensus.

That search had begun with the process. It would continue in the way The Challenge of Peace was now received by that wider audience the bishops had identified in their attempt to create a community of conscience.

FOOTNOTES

1. Origins 10:11 (August 28 1980), pp175-176.
2. Message of Pope John Paul II to Second Special Session of United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament in ORIGINS 12:6 (June 24 1982), pp 81-87.
3. Robert Kaiser, The Encyclical That Never Was: the Story of the Pontifical Commission on Population Family and Birth, 1964-1966, London, Sheed and Ward, 1987.
see also
J.A. Komonchak, 'Humanæ Vitæ and its reception: Ecclesiological Reflections', Theological Studies, 39, (1978), pp221-257.
for the making of a recent papal encyclical see
Kenneth Myers ed., Aspiring to Freedom - Commentaries on John Paul' II's Encyclical 'The Social Concerns of the Church', Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1988.
4. George Weigel, Tranquillitas Ordinis, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1987, p267.
5. Jim Castelli, The Bishops and the Bomb: Waging Peace in a Nuclear Age, Garden City, Doubleday Books, 1983
6. Castelli, op.cit., pp 14-16
Note: Before the November meeting Murphy met with Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and other Pax Christi bishops who lent support to Murphy's initiative. It was between Murphy's submission of his varium and the November meeting that Ronald Reagan was elected President of the U.S.A. Two other varia, one by Edward O'Rourke of Peoria and the other by John Whealan, Archbishop of Hartford, also concerned war and peace issues.
7. N.C.C.B. Committee Report, 'Studying War and Peace', Origins,11,(1981), p403.
8. Ibid., p403
9. Weigel, op.cit., p268
Castelli, op.cit., p19
10. The main source here is
J. Gordon Melton ed., Religious Leaders of America, Detroit, Gale, 1991
where by an alphabetic accident Bernardin's entry immediately precedes that of the Berrigan brothers.

for Hehir see
Weigel, op. cit., pp314-324.
Cardinal Krol is quoted on p.314

A critical assessment of Bernardin and his archdiocese appeared in the National Catholic Reporter, portraying him as a man of the centre, a zero, stranded between two poles in the church. Bernardin responded in his archdiocesan newspaper in typical manner:

"The N.C.R. article reflected the underlying theological and/or ecclesial polarisation evident today in the Church in this country. On the one hand, I am called a 'zero'...because it is alleged that my articulation of the 'consistent ethic of life' has undermined the pro-life movement. (This allegation is too ludicrous to respond to.) Then I am chided by someone else for not standing up to Rome on such questions as the ordination of women, celibacy etc.... Anyone who is at either end of the theological or ecclesial spectrum will naturally be unhappy with much of what happens in the Church. For completely different reasons, he or she will be convinced that the Church is heading for disaster. This conflict will never be overcome by simply giving an order, as some seem to think. It will require a real commitment to truth, serious theological reflection, openness to other points of view and possibilities, and a good amount of humility and patience."

'A Pastor's Reflections' in The Tablet, 246:7908, (29th February 1992), p276.

In an article in The Tablet, 245:7890 (19th October 1991) pp 1278-1279, entitled 'Moderates need not apply', "Scrutator" gave a character-sketch of the American hierarchy and spoke of its 'remaking' by Pope John Paul II in an increasingly conservative mould. "Scrutator" sees Bernardin as exercising a diminished influence in Rome, and describes him as increasingly reticent and cautious. In a similar way Archbishop Weakland, chairman of the committee which produced the hierarchy's Pastoral on the economy, and other survivors of Paul VI's pontificate including John Roach are 'increasingly beleaguered.'

By way of contrast, John O'Connor, 'a rare Republican bishop' enjoys close contact with the Vatican Congregation on Bishops. One sign of the interweaving of the lives of the bishops, theologians and commentators who have animated the debate surrounding 'The Challenge of Peace' is that Richard Neuhaus, a convert from Lutheranism and author of 'The Catholic Moment', was received into the Catholic church by O'Connor.

11. Philip Murnion, 'The Unmet Challenges of Vatican II', Origins, 11:10, (13th August 1981), pp145-154
12. Ibid., p147
13. Ibid., p147

14. There are at least two levels of consensus-building apparent from study of the process: first, the building of a consensus within the committee which was Bernardin's task as chairman, and by extension the achievement of consensus within the American hierarchy as that is expressed by the N.C.C.B.; secondly, the building of a consensus within the nation and within the wider church. The first level has in one sense the precondition of the second, and the massive validation of the final draft given by the N.C.C.B. in 1983 was a testament to Bernardin's achievement. The part played by the Pastoral in building a wider political and ecclesial consensus would be as much the result of its style as of its content, what the text identified as the recognised need for 'civility and charity' as well as 'conviction and commitment'. For this reciprocal need see Summary prepared by the bishops after the approval of the final text of the Pastoral in May 1983. Text of the Summary in Murnion, ed., Catholics and Nuclear War op.cit., pp249-254.
15. see J. Gremillion ed., The Church and Culture since Vatican II: The Experience of North and Latin America Notre Dame Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1985.
Papers delivered at a conference in co-operation with the Pontifical Council for Culture in November 1982 on 'The Church and Culture since Vatican II: Ecclesial creativity to meet Pastoral Needs in North and Latin America of the 1980's'.
16. N.C.C.B. Committee Report Studying War and Peace op cit., p403.
17. N.C.C.B., 'Human Life in Our Day', in Pastoral Letters of the American Hierarchy 1792-1970, ed. Hugh J. Nolan, Huntington, Our Sunday Visitor, 1971, no.103.
18. To Live in Christ Jesus: A Pastoral Reflection on the Moral Life, Washington, U.S.C.C., 1976.
19. text in Origins, 9:13, 13th September 1979, pp193-199
20. N.C.C.B. Committee Report, Studying War and Peace, op.cit., p403.
21. Ibid., p404
22. Ibid., p404
23. Castelli, op.cit., p15
24. Weigel, op.cit., p264
The bishops seem to have believed that they stood in an utterly unique historical moment, one in which, as Fr. Theodore Hesburgh would put it "there were no precedents to invoke, no history to depend on for a wise lesson, no real body of theology except for that which dates back to pacifism or a just-war doctrine that was first applied in a

day of spears, swords, bows and arrows, not ICBM's"

25. Ibid., p265
26. Joseph Bernardin, 'Speech to Interfaculty Institute for Research on Peace of Catholic University of Louvain', in Origins, 13:36, 16th February 1984, pp605-608. Reference on p606.
27. Ibid., p606
28. N.C.C.B. Committee Report Studying War and Peace, op.cit., p404
29. New draft of Pastoral Letter in Origins 12:20, 28th October 1982, pp306-328 reference on p326.
30. Ibid., p326
List of witnesses appears in the appendix to the draft..
31. Castelli, op.cit., pp78-79.
32. Castelli, op.cit., p81.
33. Weigel, op.cit., p314.
34. 'First Draft: Pastoral Letter on War and Peace', in National Catholic Reporter, Kansas City, 2nd July 1982.
35. In a contribution at the Notre Dame Conference on 'The Church and Culture since Vatican II', noted above (footnote 15), Bryan Hehir said that the interest shown by the Western Europeans, especially the West German and French episcopal conferences, came as a surprise to the American bishops. He noted that:

"it is within the competence of the U.S. bishops to comment on the impact of American foreign policy on the situation in the other country or region. It is not our business to tell other episcopates or countries what they should do."

 Gremillion ed., op.cit., p132.
36. Castelli op.cit., pp97-98
37. Origins, 12:13, 9th September 1982.
38. Castelli, op.cit., p36.
39. Origins, 11:18, 15th October 1981, pp289-292
40. In 1981 the Administrative Board of U.S.C.C. addressed the role of the church in the political order. Among its proper tasks were education of the Catholic community in its individual responsibilities, and analysis of issues in terms of the moral dimension, and

"speaking out with courage, skill and concern on public

issues involving human rights, social justice and the life of the church in society."

It continued:

"...our efforts in this area are sometimes misunderstood. The church's participation in public affairs is not a threat to the political process or to genuine pluralism, but an affirmation of their importance. The church recognises the legitimate autonomy of government and the right of all, including the church itself, to be heard in the formulation of public policy... the application of the gospel values to real situations is an essential work of the Christian community"

Origins 9, p394ff.

41. Origins, 11:25, (3rd December 1981), pp389-393.
Roach argued that
"neither the rigour of reasonable argument nor the controversy which surrounds the role of religion and politics should make us timid about stating and defending public positions on key issues."
42. Joseph Fahey, 'Pax Christi', in Thomas Shannon ed., War or Peace? The Search for New Answers, Maryknoll, Orbis, 1980, pp59-71.
43. The group also exerted corporate pressure on the Bernardin committee. On March 13th 1981 seventeen episcopal members of Pax Christi sent a letter. Signatories included Archbishops Sheehan and May and Bishops Dozier of Memphis, Fiorenza of San Angelo, Gumbleton of Detroit, Murphy of Baltimore and Sullivan of Richmond.
The bishops welcomed the committee's formation, and noted a recent meeting of military vicars in Rome. They identified the contemporary situation as one in which there was an expressed willingness to consider the use of nuclear weapons, and resort to threats of force in response to social pressures in a world polarized by the superpower conflict. They set the committee a number of questions designed to interpret Catholic teaching on war and peace in the American situation. They acknowledged the difficulties of the task but:
"the fact that there seems to be no simple answers is a tremendous challenge to all the members of our conference as we face the questions."
Origins, 10:47, 7th May 1981, pp744-746.
44. R. McCormick, 'Notes on Moral Theology', Theological Studies, 1981.
45. Hanson, op.cit., p320.
46. Origins, 11:30, 7th January 1982
47. Origins, 12:7, 1st July 1982, pp101-105.
48. see footnote #39.

49. see for example Hunthausen's address to the Pacific Northwest Synod of the Lutheran Church.
Origins, 11:7, 2nd July 1981, pp110-112.
50. Bishop Malone, 'How effective is the Church's social doctrine?', in Origins, 11:24, 26th November 1981, pp373-378.
51. Bryan Hehir reported in Gremillion, op.cit., pp129-139.
52. Origins, 12:11, 26th August 1982, pp170-171.
The extended period of discussion, Bernardin argued,
"would help to make the pastoral truly a bishops' statement."
53. Ibid.
54. see the report in Origins, 12:8, 15th July 1982, pp113-121.
see also David Byers, 'The American Bishops at Collegeville', America, 21st August 1982, pp87-90.
55. Origins, 12:9, 29th July 1982, p140ff.
56. The full text of the second draft of the Pastoral Letter is in Origins, 12:20, 28th October 1982.

For the November meeting see Origins, 12:25, 2nd December 1982, pp393-408, and

Thomas Reese, 'Nuclear Weapons: The Bishops' Debate', in America, 18th December 1982, pp386-9, and
editorial in America, 4th December 1982.
see also Castelli, op.cit., pp.109-125.
57. Origins, 12:25, 2nd December 1982, pp 393-8.
reference on p398.
58. Castelli, op.cit., pp111-112.
59. Origins 12:25, op.cit., pp404-405.
60. Ibid., p407.
61. for the contributions of 'designated intervenors'
Ibid., p.401-406.
62. Ibid., p396. marginal comment.
63. for text see Ibid., pp398-401.
64. Castelli, op.cit., p119.
65. Bernardin's statement was reported in
Origins, 12:25, 2nd December 1982, pp398-399.

Dougherty draws attention to the matter of substance which did emerge in a subsequent letter by Clark to Bernardin on

January 15th:

'...one remarkable result of the debate over the bishops' views, particularly the condemnation of any strategy which aimed at annihilation of cities was that it elicited from.. Clark and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger the first unambiguous assurance ever given by high-ranking U.S. government officials that this country is not committed to a strategy of levelling cities.'

in James Dougherty, The Bishops and Nuclear Weapons (Hamden, Archon, 1984) p142.

Clark's letter of January 15th was called 'particularly helpful' in footnote 81, paragraph 179 of the Pastoral's final text.

A different view to Dougherty's is put forward by Finnis et al.:

'Had the bishops considered how secretaries of defense, since 1974, used the phrase "target population as such [or per se]", Clark's letter would not have been helpful.'

John Finnis, Joseph M Boyle Jr., Germain Grisez, Nuclear Deterrence, morality and realism, Oxford, Clarendon, 1987.

66. Cardinal John Krol, Origins, 12:25, op.cit., pp403-404.
67. Castelli, op.cit., p127.
68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., pp134-135.
70. Ibid., p127.
71. Ibid., p140.
72. Peter Henriot, the Jesuit director of the Center for Concern in Washington, D.C. regretted the introduction of this material. He saw the draft's treatment of the just war theory as 'clouded by extraneous material supportive of United States military policy and by the addition of concept of comparative justice, which has no basis in the classical discussion of just war theory.' in Hanson, op.cit., p297.
73. Edward Feighan, 'The Freeze in Congress', in Paul Cole and William Taylor eds., The Nuclear Freeze Debate, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1983) pp. 29-56. Reference is to p29.
74. Quinn backed the freeze in a Pastoral Statement, Origins, 11:18, October 15th, 1981, pp284-287.
75. Origins, 13:1, May 19th, 1983, p15 for final text. and Origins, 12:20, October 28th, 1982, pp314-315 for second draft.
The first draft expressed the need for strategic policy to pursue the safest course, and this would not be promoted by

the first use of nuclear weapons. The second draft was more strongly opposed to first use and contained the recognition that 'it had long been American and NATO policy that nuclear weapons, especially so-called tactical nuclear weapons, would likely be used, if NATO forces in Europe seemed in danger of losing a conflict that had been restricted to conventional weapons.'

Dougherty, op. cit., p175, credits the article by McGeorge Bundy et al. in Foreign Affairs in effecting this tougher stance on first use.

The final text of the Pastoral, instead of denouncing any first use as immoral, refers to the bishops' desire to 'reinforce the barrier against any use of nuclear weapons. Our support of a "no first use" policy must be seen in this light.'

Dougherty quotes Hehir as seeing in this treatment evidence of the bishops' desire to prevent any quick or easy resort to nuclear weapons.

76. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Address at Catholic University of Louvain, February 1st, 1984
Origins, 13:36, op.cit., p607
77. Schotte Memorandum, op.cit. See footnote no. 91.
78. Origins, 12:19, October 21st, 1982, pp292-294.
79. Origins, 12:20, October 28th, 1982, p317.
80. Castelli, op.cit., p154.
81. Castelli, op.cit., pp151-152.
82. Russell Shaw, 'Nuclear Weapons: the Bishops and the Media', America, December 18th, 1982, pp389-391.
83. Origins, 18:41, March 23rd, 1989, p728.
84. Origins, 12:20, October 28th 1982, p325.
85. Shaw, op.cit., p390.
86. Ibid., p.391
87. This is not to diminish the 'signs of the times' to a synonym for 'whatever happens to be going on at the moment'. This is the accusation made by Hebblethwaite against John Paul II.
see his 'John Paul II' in Adrian Hastings ed., op. cit., p453.
88. International Consultation on War and Peace. Vatican communiqué: Informal Meeting on U.S. Bishops' Pastoral in Origins, 12:34, February 3rd 1983, p545.

89. This may also have been the fear of some of its advocates. Archbishop Roach, addressing the N.C.C.B. in November 1983, recalled the 'informal consultation':
"There was speculation at the time and I confess some apprehension on the part of us that we were being pressured to back off, moderate our views and be less forthright...[but] far from weakening our document, it is now generally recognised that the consultation organized by the Holy See helped strengthen it."
Origins, 13:24, November 24th p983, pp401-405.
90. Weigel, op.cit., pp275-280.
91. Schotte text is reproduced in
Origins, 12:43, 7th April 1983.
"At the end of the meeting it was agreed to make a synthesis available which would gather together in ideas which emerged in the course of the debate. This is not a verbatim report but a text which would contain the main contributions from the participants and which could be a point of reference and a guide to the U.S. Bishops in preparing the next draft of their Pastoral Letter."
References here are to a private copy and will be referred to as the 'Schotte memorandum'. All references in the text which follows are to it unless otherwise noted.
92. Weigel op.cit, p277.
93. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
94. The Pope's address was carried in full in
Origins, 12:6, June 24th 1982, pp81-87.
The First Special Session had been held in 1978, and its key accomplishment had been to establish new machinery for disarmament negotiations. Pope Paul VI had addressed it. The Second Special Session was marked by a number of rallies and special services in New York, an all-night vigil at the United Nations, and a disarmament rally in Central Park which attracted a crowd of half a million people.
In the papal speech the judgment on deterrence comes after reference to the popular peace movements.
In December Origins carried a clarification of the meaning of the papal text because of the interest it had aroused. The original French text of the passage on deterrence was given:
"Dans les conditions actuelles, une dissuasion basée sur l'équilibre, non certes comme une fin en soi mais comme une étape sur la voie d'un désarmement progressif, peut être encore jugée comme moralement acceptable."
Origins, 12:26, December 9th 1982.
95. Schotte memorandum, op. cit.
96. Ibid.
97. Joseph Gremillion, 'Justice and Peace' in Hastings ed., op.cit., p192.

Bryan Hehir developed a radical way of thinking about the respective roles of the Holy See and an episcopal conference in the address to justice and peace issues. Hehir stresses that only since the Second Vatican Council have justice and peace questions become major ecclesial concerns, and that while the episcopal conference is a new structure so too since the Council the Holy See's role has been much expanded.

"The bishops' conferences and the Holy See seek to promote a universal moral and ecclesial framework to which all might appeal in arriving at their positions on particular issues. While sharing such principles conferences may arrive at different positions but the shared framework is vital to building up a network of cooperation among the conference."

Partnership not demarcation seems to be the keynote for Hehir and to be the proper mark of the relationship between an episcopal conference and the Holy See.

Gremillion, Church and Culture, op.cit., pp129-139.

98. Hanson refers to an article carried by the National Catholic Reporter on May 13th 1983. It reports that Bernardin told his fellow-bishops that the Pope himself had met with the committee in January. Hanson summarises:

"Whenever the American delegates asked about specifics, the pope stayed with generalities. All this ecclesiastical bureaucracy resulted in detaching the pope from specific responsibility, encouraging the American bishops while setting parameters for their letter, and indicating to the European bishops that they must come to grips with this issue."

Hanson, op.cit., p304.

99. Castelli, op.cit., pp154-179.

100. Ibid., p165.

101. Hanson, op.cit., p299.

102. Secretary of the N.C.C.B.

103. Castelli, op.cit., p167.

104. Hanson., op.cit., p290.

105. Origins, 18:9, July 21st 1988, pp133-148.

106. Ibid., pp130-133.

107. Hanson, op.cit., p302.

108. Ibid.

109. Letter of U.S. Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, to Archbishop Bernardin: Origins, 12:19, October 21st 1982, pp292-294:

'... I am concerned that the draft pastoral letter fails to

do justice to the efforts by the United States and its allies to maintain the peace through deterrence and negotiation.'

'During the 37 years since the end of World War II the threat to peace has not diminished, yet the sovereignty and freedom of those democracies have prevailed because they have remained resolute in their posture of deterrence. Given these fruits of our long-standing policies and given the horrible consequences which could accompany war - especially a nuclear war - the burden of proof must fall upon those who would depart from the sound policies of deterrence which have kept the peace for so long.'

110. quoted in Gremillion ed., The Church and Culture since Vatican II, op.cit., pp129-139.
111. Avery Dulles S.J., 'The Doctrinal Authority of Bishops' Conferences' in Thomas Reese ed., Episcopal Conferences: Historical, Canonical and Theological Studies, Washington D.C., 1989, pp207-231.
112. Ibid., p224.
113. Origins, 18:41, March 23rd 1985, pp682-687.
114. Origins, 18:42, 1989, p726.
115. Gremillion ed., The Church and Culture since Vatican II, op.cit., pp129-139.
116. Thomas Reese 'Conflict and Consensus in the N.C.C.B./U.S.C.C.', Reese, Episcopal Conferences, pp107-135.
117. Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

The Content of the Pastoral Letter

'...something she yearned for by which her life might be filled with action at once rational and ardent; and since the time was gone by for guiding visions and spiritual directors, since prayer heightened yearning but not instruction, what lamp was there but knowledge? Surely learned men kept the only oil...'

George Eliot, 'Middlemarch'

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INTRODUCTION

Paragraphs #1-4

The opening paragraphs of The Challenge of Peace describe both the genesis and the character of the Pastoral Letter as being true to its name. It is a pastoral document in two respects. First, it has its origin in that view of church and culture which emerged from the Second Vatican Council,(1) and in particular as it was developed in the Council's most characteristic document, the Pastoral Constitution The Church in the Modern World, a view which enabled the church to engage with hope in its response to the 'signs of the times'.(2) The bishops made explicit the profound inspiration and guidance they have received from the Pastoral Constitution (3) and this is shown by the frequent quotations from it and references to it in the text. Curran goes further, suggesting that the impact of the Pastoral Constitution can be seen not only in the content but also in the underlying moral method of the Pastoral Letter.(4)

Secondly, the Letter has its origins more particularly in the priorities which emerge from the bishops' pastoral task, as they minister within a culture gripped by terror of the consequences of nuclear war, and within a society which is uniquely placed to influence the future course of the nuclear age.(5) The Challenge of Peace is then a pastoral teaching document, both in its origins and its address, and it is this pastoral character which colours and shapes what is a very long and complex presentation.

The Pastoral Constitution identified the present time as one in which 'the whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance towards maturity'.(6) Two decades elapsed between that judgment, and the response to it which The Challenge of Peace offers, and the bishops identify the contemporary factors which precipitated their teaching initiative.

There is in the realm of public policy the intensified dynamic of the nuclear arms race. This brings a particular challenge to American culture. Speaking as

'Americans, citizens of the nation which was first to produce atomic weapons, which has been the only one to use them and which today is one of the handful of nations capable of decisively influencing the course of the nuclear age', (7) the bishops establish both their right and their duty, what they call their 'grave human, moral and political responsibilities' to help shape a response. The bishops appear to say here, that although the 'moment' of crisis was identified two decades earlier, there is a new urgency in responding to it, and perhaps also a moment of opportunity.

In the realm of public attitudes the bishops identify a new moment which is connected to the second factor, that widespread sense of terror and fear which the bishops assert they share. (8) A new moment has come, not only objectively as a result of the dynamic of the quickening pace of the arms race, but also as a result of what the bishops discern as the public reaction to that dynamic. This had been identified by Pope John Paul II in his Message to the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982, and the American bishops now seek to respond with a message of hope, invitation and challenge. (9)

PEACE IN THE MODERN WORLD:

RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

Paragraphs #5-26

As a prelude to the details of that message the bishops offer three qualifying statements about the nature of the pastoral, and its relation to the Catholic tradition. That there is such a tradition they regard as self-evident, but by its very nature which is 'long and complex', (10) they concede that it does not yield simple answers to complex questions. Not only is it a tradition crafted over many years, but it is not univocal:

'it speaks through many voices and has produced multiple forms of religious witness.' (11)

When the bishops speak of 'tradition' here the term seems to

carry the breadth of the description found in Dei Verbum(12) in which Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and Magisterium in a 'supremely wise arrangement' guide and teach true understanding. Tradition then encompasses everything from the Sermon on the Mount to the papal magisterium of the nuclear age. The tradition is not a simple linear progression and by implication is capable of further development. The rationale for the Pastoral is rooted in the need to give attention to 'complex' questions, especially as they arise out of the details of current understandings of deterrence and nuclear strategy. The attention which the bishops bring will benefit in part from the tradition, but it will not issue in their making final and definitive judgment, for if the already established tradition does not yield immediate responses to the current crisis, the bishops are modest about their own initiative. Their letter is intended as a 'contribution to a wider common effort, meant to call Catholics and all members of our political community to dialogue and specific decisions...'(13)

Behind the reference to the many voices within the tradition lies the debate over whether it is legitimate to see the pacifist and just war traditions as parallel and complementary, or whether the just war tradition alone is normative for the Catholic community.(14) Both approaches were canvassed by members within the committee, and the debate surfaced at the Rome Consultation in January 1983.(15)

The bishops then speak of the contribution they hope to make. In their attempt to 'develop' the tradition, the bishops stress the need for the reader to be aware of the different levels of moral authority which their individual judgments and statements carry.(16) In making this plain, the bishops invoke the precedent of the Pastoral Constitution itself, with its clarification of the 'diverse elements' within its text, some with a permanent, others with a transitory character.(17) By analogy, the Pastoral Letter will include statements of universal moral principle and applications of those principles which are prudential judgments. By invoking the practice of the Pastoral Constitution, the bishops indicate that they are alert to the

danger that in making such a qualification, one which seems to have its point de départ in the Rome Consultation,(18) they will weaken the impact of their argument. They are therefore quick to defend the seriousness of the prudential judgments which they arrive at, and ask that these be given 'serious attention and consideration by Catholics as they determine whether their moral judgments are consistent with the Gospel'.(19) For non-Catholic readers, this careful establishment of the hierarchy of truths within the pastoral is subsumed within the cogency of the argument.

The bishops then speak more generally of the process the Pastoral's character dictated, and the methodology they followed in its preparation. They defend both the specificity of the document, and the diversity of the audience it addresses, a diversity they see as given a warrant by the Pastoral Constitution.(20) The preparation of the letter had exposed the bishops to 'the range of strongly held opinion in the Catholic community on questions of war and peace.'(21) The implication is that, given that exposure, the judgments the bishops do reach are to be accorded a hearing based not solely on the ecclesial or technical status of the judgment but on the careful process which led to it.(22) For some commentators this section demonstrates how the bishops establish a middle way between those who would deny them any competence to speak on such complex and technical matters, and those who would accord their judgments too great a certitude. The specific moral judgments they make are the response to truly moral questions even if they have a political dimension. The way the bishops follow in arriving at specific judgments is one which excludes certitude. This, Curran suggests, is not only a way of 'doing ethics', it is a way of 'being church', a way of promoting the church as a 'big church' in which the bishops have the right and responsibility to communicate their specific moral judgments, while those who respectfully disagree and dissent may do so from within the community. For Curran this points to exciting possibilities in other areas of Christian morality.(23)

Having set out the Pastoral's origin and method, the bishops confess the modesty of its scope. The Council had called for a 'completely fresh re-appraisal of war.'(24) The bishops are swift to issue a disclaimer that their Letter is such an appraisal. Rather than a 'final synthesis' it is an invitation to continue the work. The bishops then set the Letter in the context of a flowing and developing process as the church seeks to articulate a theology of peace. If the bishops are modest about their own contribution, they suggest that the church is not the sole locus of that search. A theology of peace

'... should specify the obstacles in the way of peace, as these are understood theologically and in the social and political sciences. It should both identify the specific contributions a community of faith can make to the work of peace and relate these to the wider work of peace pursued by other groups and institutions in society.'(25)

When in the final section the bishops address different constituent groups within the church and American society,(26) the address would be not only expressive of the distinctiveness of the church's life and its teaching mission, but would be rooted in an engagement with those groups which had assisted their learning, as they prepared to speak. If the bishops are modest about the scope of the letter they are vigorous in defence of the enterprise:

'As bishops we believe that the nature of Catholic moral teaching, the principles of Catholic ecclesiology, and the demands of our pastoral ministry require that this letter speak both to Catholics in a specific way and to the wider political community regarding public policy. Neither audience and neither mode of address can be neglected when the issue has the cosmic dimensions of the nuclear arms race.'(27)

A. PEACE AND THE KINGDOM

Paragraphs #27-55

The bishops begin their contribution to building a theology of peace by examining the scriptural treatment of 'peace and the kingdom'. They write of the centrality which the scriptures enjoy in the enterprise they have undertaken:

'for us as believers, the sacred scriptures provide the foundation for confronting war and peace today'.(28)

At the outset the bishops want to modify any illusion that there is a single scriptural tradition to explore. They commit themselves to the view that peace has been understood in different ways at different times, and this is connected with the acceptance that the scriptures themselves bear witness to having been written over a long period of time, an historical process which the bishops confess is both complicating and enhancing. Within the scriptural treatment of war and peace there are 'elements within the ongoing revelation of God's will for his creation' which although not in themselves sufficient to build a treatise do

'provide us with direction for our lives and hold out to us an object of hope, a final promise, which guides and directs our actions here and now.'(29)

This last statement reveals the key image which the bishops identify in scripture, an image of hope which gives purpose to their reflective work and informs the need for the task. There are echoes here of the first and abandoned title of the Letter, 'God's Hope in an Age of Fear'.(30) God's hope as revealed in scripture gives the context for the bishops' task. Yet within the body of the Pastoral the scriptures are not the first resort either for hope or for authority as the bishops develop their argument. In that sense, for all the space given to the biblical tradition at the outset, and the generally warm welcome accorded to this section by evangelical critics for existing at all,(31) it remains in a curious way detached from the rest of the Letter. It seems on the whole to be descriptive of a vision the bishops

wish to share, rather than acting as a resource for the bishops as they elaborate their argument.

A1. Old Testament

Paragraphs #30-38

Both in the hierarchy's discussion on the second draft and at the Rome Consultation concern had been voiced about parts of the scriptural treatment,(32) and there had been much new drafting. One example will suffice. Whereas the first draft began by elaborating the theme of shalom, the third draft instead reflected on the theme of God as Warrior in the Old Testament.

Thus,

'God is often seen as the one who leads the Hebrews in battle, protects them from their enemies, makes them victorious over other armies'.(33)

The text sees this image as modified by others, and

'gradually transformed, particularly after the experience of exile, when God was no longer identified with military victory and might'.(34)

Is such a change of emphasis the result of a more scrupulous biblical scholarship or of anxiety that the Pastoral Letter had been too 'soft' on the pacifist option?

The treatment of 'peace' and 'peace and fidelity to the covenant' which follow is short but contains two important emphases.

Peace is seen as a gift from God, and is communal rather than personal in its focus.

'The well-being and freedom from fear which result from God's love are viewed primarily as they pertain to the community and its unity and harmony. Furthermore, this unity and harmony extend to all creation; true peace implied a restoration of the right order not just among peoples, but within all of creation'.(35)

Secondly, peace is inextricably bound up with justice. Sketching the contribution of the prophets, the bishops declare there could be no peace without justice, nor could there be peace which did not have its origin in God, as distinct from human alliances.(36)

Finally, the text speaks of 'hope for eschatological peace', the clinging tenaciously in the midst of unfulfilled longing to a time of future promise when 'peace and justice would embrace and all creation would be safe from harm.'(37)

A2. New Testament

Paragraphs #39-54.

In their examination of the New Testament, # 39-54, the bishops concentrate almost exclusively on Jesus' words and actions. In a footnote the bishops draw attention to the distance Jesus established between himself and those committed to radical social change by violent means.(38)

First, they examine 'Jesus and Reign of God'. This 'new reality' is given shape in the Sermon on the Mount, and is characterized by forgiveness and an inclusive love:

'he called for a love which went beyond family ties and bonds of friendship to reach even those who were enemies. Such a love does not seek revenge but rather is merciful in the face of threat and opposition.'(39)

This 'impossible, abstract ideal' is made accessible by the actions of Jesus which show how to live in God's reign, and by the gift of the Spirit. In his resurrection, 'the fullest demonstration of the power of God's reign', the gift of peace is seen:

'The peace which he gives to [the disciples] as he greets them as their risen Lord is the fulness of salvation. It is the reconciliation of the world and God: the restoration of the unity and harmony of all creation which the Old Testament spoke of with such longing.'(40)

This last point is developed in the second section, 'Jesus and the Community of Believers'. From the outset the Christian community recognized that the peace and reconciliation which mark the power of God were not fully operative in the world, yet they looked forward with confidence to the fullness of the kingdom, and recognized they were

'called to be ministers of reconciliation, people who would

make the peace which God had established visible through the love and unity within their own communities.'(41)

That pattern of discipleship moves beyond those confines, however, calling for reconciliation among all peoples.

A3 Conclusion

Paragraph #55

The bishops conclude by stating what is hardly novel, that scripture does not give detailed answers to specific questions about nuclear war. Rather it gives a sense of direction, 'urgent direction when we look at today's concrete realities.'(42)

While the gift of eschatological peace remains before us in hope, the gift is an experienced reality in the reconciliation effected by Christ. The task is to seek ways in which to make forgiveness, justice and mercy visible in a world where violence and enmity are norms.

CRITIQUE

John Bray in his evaluation of the Pastoral's use of scripture writes:

'The bishops' letter is a beautifully crafted work that draws on scholarly resources that are far richer than anything available within our evangelical heritage.'(43)

If that is so, the question arises: how effective is the use which the bishops make of these resources?

The scriptural section is open to criticism on two main fronts. First, it fails to deal at all with the vital question of the believer's relationship to the state. This is seen by Bray as a 'glaring area of oversight'.(44) He sees the bishops as strangely silent on the classical texts such as Romans 13 :1-7, apparently unwilling to reflect on the contradictory signals within the New Testament on the relationship of the believer to government institutions. He concludes:

'The bishops have eliminated the traditional painful tension

between the Christian as the follower of Christ and the Christian as a citizen of the state by simply ignoring those passages which deal with the state.'⁽⁴⁵⁾

That polarization is a particularly Protestant one and it would have been very surprising to have found it in this document.⁽⁴⁶⁾

Secondly, and more significantly, the scriptural section seems to exhaust the bishops' use of scripture in the pastoral's development of the argument. In the 283 paragraphs which follow, the Bible is quoted on eight occasions, and on three of these in the context of a papal document. Quentin Quesnell ⁽⁴⁷⁾ expresses his suspicion. In addressing the hermeneutical assumptions of the Pastoral he asks whether the bishops are primarily teachers or preachers in their use of the Bible. In other words, do the bishops come to scriptural texts with a prior decision about their meaning and the effect they are permitted to have? Quesnell thinks this is the case and, on this basis, challenges the bishops with ignoring the mandate of the New Testament for non-violence as constitutive of the gospel address, and in effect shows how a pastoral based on scripture as a result of preaching would frame a different kind of teaching. The approach he canvasses would lay the facts before the faithful so that the faithful can apply the Gospel texts to the facts:

'The Gospel has always been what it is today: a challenge to more in the name of faith. But when for centuries moral theology became separated from ascetical-mystical or spiritual theology, bishops as teachers, not as preachers of the Gospel, became gradually used to laying down the minimum necessary rather than proclaiming the Gospel call to ever more.'⁽⁴⁸⁾

These two contributions enliven the debate over this part of the Pastoral Letter and reveals, in Quesnell's phrase, the 'hermeneutical prolegomena'. The most revealing impact of the criticism is not so much on the biblical scholarship or probity which lies behind the section, but on the fact that, consciously or unconsciously, the critics have identified characteristics of the Letter which are the result of the process which framed it. That is to say, the scriptural section is not independent of the

bishops' intention, enjoying its own validity as a study. The omissions and qualifications which have been identified arise not out of faulty or slipshod scholarship but out of the debate which produced the Letter and the purpose this section serves. As an example of the way in which the process affected the scriptural section in a significant way we might recall that the status of non-violent witness within the church was struggled with in the course of the Letter's preparation, and in the end was not accorded a parallel or equivalent status to the just war tradition of the church. The Pastoral went as far as it could in the value it accorded the tradition, but it could not make it constitutive of the overall tradition nor acknowledge it as the dominant voice within scripture.

Secondly, the bishops set out to make a contribution to public debate, to engage with government agencies in the process, and to make specific judgments in their conclusions. The kind of prophetic utterance which is available to the traditional 'peace churches' is not possible for the Catholic church in the U.S., not least because it is addressing a whole culture and not simply individual conscience. The radicalism of the Catholic address lay in that aim, and, in this regard, in the process rather than the product.

The debate over the non-violent tradition and the intended audience of the document are clearly seen in the shape of this section, and in the omissions which critics highlight. Yet the scriptural section gives a vision, and one which moves well beyond the older proof-text approach which simply scatters scripture throughout documents by way of illustration. That the bishops begin with scripture is generally commended by commentators outwith the Catholic tradition. That there are lacunae within it illustrates that the bishops were most certainly engaged in teaching rather than preaching, and that the biblical teaching no less than other parts of the text is modified by the process and the character of the church.(49)

B KINGDOM AND HISTORY

Paragraphs #56-65

In this brief section the bishops address the tension which arises between the Christian vision of the reign of God and its concrete realization in history. This tension and the recognition that peace is possible but never assured is what gives rise to the complexity of Catholic reflection on warfare. That complexity is not easily held within one tradition:

'In the 'already but not yet' of Christian existence, members of the Church choose different paths to move toward the realization of the kingdom in history.'(50)

The tension is not only between kingdom and history but can be between the competing demands of peace and justice.

Acknowledging this tension, the bishops accord a special place first to the Pastoral Constitution and then to the popes of the nuclear age. The Pastoral Constitution is accorded a primacy of inspiration

'for it represents the prayerful thinking of bishops of the entire world and calls vigorously for fresh new attitudes, while faithfully reflecting traditional Church teaching.'(51)

Not surprisingly in a Catholic document the rationale offered for the use of the conciliar and papal texts is much briefer than that dealing with scripture.

A crucial assertion is made in # 64 which reveals the way in which the bishops understand their task in relation to their own culture and the wider church:

'The teaching of popes and councils must be incarnated by each local church in a manner understandable to its culture. This allows each local church to bring its unique insights and experience to bear on the issues shaping our world...In this letter we wish to continue and develop the teaching on peace and war which we have previously made, and which reflects both the teaching of the universal Church and the insights and experience of the Catholic community of the United States.'

CRITIQUE:

It is tempting to contrast the ways in which teaching from within the church is employed with the use made of scripture, and it is difficult not to feel the unevenness in the fabric of the Letter as we pass from the biblical vision to this rather curious section. An aggressive reading might suggest that here we are more truly in touch with the inspiration of the document, and with those factors which define its scope, namely the teaching agents of the church, the Council and the popes. This view might see the scriptural section as purely introductory, even tangential to the argument of the Letter. Certainly, as we saw earlier, scripture plays very little explicit part in the rest of the text. Yet, that same judgment might be made of the papal contribution, with the marked exception of the contribution of Pope John Paul II on deterrence. Would the argument be significantly or subtly altered by the omission of the papal texts? Surely the answer is that, in the majority of cases, the papal contributions are illustrative rather than conditioning. It might even be said that the use made of specific papal thought is more akin to the older forms of the use of scripture in Catholic documents, illustrative proof-texting rather than constitutive of the argument.(52) In this particular section, the main interest is what it tells us of the role the American hierarchy has as an agent which both brings the universal teaching to its culture, and brings its particular experience to bear on the universal church.

Pope Paul VI had addressed this broad political task in Octogesima Adveniens, writing of that sense of the political arena as a realm of activity in which it was not only proper but necessary to engage:

'To take politics seriously at its different levels - local, regional, national and world-wide - is to affirm the duty of man, every man, to recognize the concrete reality and the value of the freedom of choice that is offered to him to seek to bring about both the good of the city and of the nation and of mankind. Politics are a demanding manner - but not the only one - of living the Christian commitment to the service of others'.(53)

How that was to be achieved, its style and content, was to be determined by the local church.(54) This theme was reaffirmed in the Roman Synod of 1971, with its statement that working for justice was a constitutive element of preaching the gospel.(55) Being faithful to the world's struggle for justice is a vital Christian service in a human culture trapped in the paradox of a world beset by forces of division and antagonism yet marked by interdependence.

One marked feature of the development of the bishops' thinking as they moved from draft to draft is the increased prominence of attention paid to an eschatological perspective. Whereas in the first draft the dominant theme was that of living out the vision of the Sermon on the Mount, the second draft added the section on 'Kingdom and History', which reflected the imperfection of the present in relation to eschatological completeness. This perspective which was sought by participants at the Rome Consultation (56) has, Curran argues, a significant effect on the the style and mood of the Pastoral.(57) If too often in American culture the mainstream churches have been conformist, unable to offer a thorough critique of culture, then an eschatological perspective can free social ethics in a number of significant ways. It sets up a tension between present imperfections and future fulfilment, between the believing community and the surrounding culture as the eschaton provides a negative critique of all existing human institutions.

Is it true to see this as the motor of the Pastoral's critique of the nuclear arms regimen? Too developed an eschatological view would surely act as an inhibitor of engagement in public debate. The central eschatological category which the bishops seem to offer is a horizon of hope rather than judgment, and the eschatological strand does not lead to any lack of urgency in seeking change in the present. Murnion calls it a 'middle-of-the-road eschatology' in that it is neither a millenarian pacifism nor a chiliastic crusade.(58)

There is in short a certain symmetry in the way in which the text draws on both the teaching of the church and scripture. The influence of papal and conciliar texts is not exhausted by explicit reference. Just as scripture provides the vision of the kingdom which the Pastoral reflects, so the corpus of papal and conciliar teaching, along with the American hierarchy's own statements, constitutes the developing tradition into which the Pastoral Letter comes. In that emerging tradition, and for different reasons, the Pastoral Constitution and the statements of Pope John Paul II have special place. The latter is the immediate context in which all Catholic teaching must currently work: the former has to a considerable extent formed the nature of the contemporary church's understanding of its role in culture.

Does this mixing of tradition, scripture and magisterium correspond to the vision which Robert Murray saw in Dei Verbum? Murray reminds us that the conciliar text saw the magisterium as subordinate to the Word, but then brought forward a 'problematic image' of the three as a kind of trinity. Murray concludes:

'...the third member [magisterium] is only commensurate with the two modes of revelation if it means a charism, constantly in action through the Church, guiding true understanding and teaching it. It is always to be hoped that this charism will be active in popes and bishops, but it is not...reduced solely to their authority.'(59)

C. THE MORAL CHOICES FOR THE KINGDOM

Paragraphs #66-121

This long section is one which well demonstrates the effect of the consultative process. A reflection on the relative contribution of the just war and of the non-violent tradition, it makes the final text markedly different from earlier drafts. The impact made by the November 1982 meeting of the N.C.C.B., and more particularly by the Rome Consultation is apparent. In the second draft this section began with an exposition of the tradition of Christian pacifism. This was followed by a setting-out of the criteria developed in the just war tradition. In this final text the section opens with the assertion of governments' right and obligation to offer national defence. This is underlined by a number of conciliar and papal quotations. Pacifism is dealt with only at the end of the section.

C1. The Nature of Peace

Paragraphs #68-70

The Letter sets out the context in which moral choice can best be exercised, that of peace. In response to the Council's call for a 'fresh appraisal' of war, the Letter regards such a task as moving beyond the examination of the war-machine, of weapons systems and military strategy. The context the Council described was one of the dignity of the human person, the avowed heart of all Catholic social teaching. The tradition also insists that human persons are by nature social, called to work together. Peace is the context of such a vision of human dignity and human society . Thus,

'the Church's teaching on war and peace establishes a strong presumption against war which is binding on all; it then examines when this presumption may be overridden, precisely in the name of preserving the kind of peace which protects human dignity and human rights.' (60)

C2. The Presumption against War and the Principle of
Legitimate Self-Defence
Paragraphs #71-79.

The importance which the bishops accord to this presumption and principle is evidenced in the space they devote to it. The warrant for the principle is sought in the offering of a mix of papal and conciliar texts. The real interest in this part of the Letter is the dialogue it reveals, a dialogue between the voice of those prepared to carry arms and the voice of those committed to non-violence. This dialogue is seen as taking place in the context of two principles which are not to be challenged: first, the state's right to defend itself and secondly, the principle that those who bear arms and those who refuse both defend peace. This charge to defend peace is an 'inalienable obligation...the how of defending peace...offers moral options'.(61)

The state's right is asserted by reference to statements of Pope Pius XII. There exists no option for a state to fail in its defence of its people against armed, unjust aggression. Armed force may not be the only defense against such aggression. Non-violent means of resolving conflict 'best reflect the call of Jesus both to love and to justice', but resort to weapons and armed force in the defence of justice is legitimate simply because of the fact of aggression, oppression and injustice. It is this very explicit marrying of the principles of justice and of peace which protect the bishops at this point from appearing to say that the Lord demands one way of being and the facts another. That force is sometimes justified and that nations must provide for their defence is regarded as Christian realism, a theme developed in a lengthy quotation from Pope John Paul II.(62) In it he warns against a utopian view of the possibility of a permanently peaceful society which suffers not only from lack of realism, but can be the product of failure to understand the human condition, of evasion or even calculated self-interest. False hopes lead to the false peace of totalitarianism.

The bishops acknowledge the 'misunderstanding' which so often affects the debate between those who bear arms and those who resist. Most space is given to the latter group. They are absolved from the charge of 'being indifferent or apathetic to world evils', while

'no government, and certainly no Christian, may simply assume that such individuals are mere pawns of conspiratorial forces or guilty of cowardice.'(63)

The bishops did not feel it necessary at this point to do other than commend those who bear arms to protect 'peace of a sort', and do not feel it necessary to protect them from the moral charges they make so explicit in relation to those who follow the other moral option.(64)

C3. The Just-War Criteria

Paragraphs #80-110

Given the freedom of individuals to offer a pacifist witness or to support a legitimate use of force in self-defence, and given that governments must defend their people against unjust aggression, the bishops address themselves to elaborating the moral principles which provide guidance for public policy and individual choice. The chief repository of these is the just war tradition, which the document treats under the traditional heads of *ius ad bellum* and *ius in bello*.

The bishops preface this with two statements. First, the presumption in decision-making must always be in favour of peace and against war. Only the most powerful reasons can override that presumption, which is reflected in the desire all sane people have for peace. Secondly, the new factor in twentieth century reflection, particularly in papal thought,(65) is the effect of the absence of an international authority. It is the existence of decentralized international order which is the context of the right of states to self-defence. These two factors are set alongside the articulation of the just war tradition by Augustine, and his view of the 'not yet' dimension of the kingdom of God.

In their presentation of the tradition the bishops reveal two concerns which rescue this section from being a summary of the well-known. First, in addressing the issue of 'competent authority' the bishops speak of the particular needs which arise within a democratic tradition. In such a context, the question is not whether the authority is competent in itself. What is at stake is the way such an authority acts:

'Some of the bitterest divisions of society in our own nation's history, for example, have been provoked over the question of whether or not a president of the United States has acted constitutionally or legally in involving our country in a de facto war, even if - indeed, especially if - war was never formally declared.'(66)

This passing reference to the Vietnam experience seems to suggest that a democratic political culture demands a more sophisticated ideal of competence than a simple constitutional fact. The bishops also signal that their treatment of conscientious objection will be within this context of competent authority.

The second concern arises in their treatment of a novel category, that of 'comparative justice'. The letter claims that concentration on the means of waging war in the present debate has obscured attentiveness to the comparative justice of the positions of prospective enemies. They pose the question:

'...are the values at stake critical enough to override the presumption against war?'(67)

The third draft of the Letter had recognized defects in the American system but insisted there was a greater justice observable in American society than in totalitarian regimes. This insistence is omitted in the final text and the criterion emphasizes the presumption against war. Indeed, this presumption is strengthened by the following judgment as the bishops distance themselves from a political view which too easily ascribes right or God to be on the side either of nations or individuals:

'In a world of sovereign states recognizing neither a common moral authority nor a central political authority, comparative justice stresses that no state should act on the basis that it has 'absolute justice' on its side...Far from legitimizing a

crusade mentality, comparative justice is designed to relativize absolute claims and to restrain the use of force even in a 'justified' conflict.'(68)

The bishops end their consideration of the criteria affecting ius ad bellum with a reminder of the application of the principle of proportionality to the conduct of war, which led their conference to conclude in the Resolution on Southeast Asia in 1971 that the conflict no longer met that demand, having 'reached such a level of devastation to the adversary and damage to our own society that continuing it could not be justified.'(69)

In turning to the two key principles of discrimination and proportionality the bishops state their view that it is difficult to distinguish here between the decision to have recourse to war and the conduct of that war. This is the result of the particular dynamic of escalation in the nuclear age. The dynamic of the nuclear age necessitates the recognition of the difference between classical and nuclear war, which in the Pope's phrase is 'a difference so to speak of nature'.(70) Such a recognition, underpinned by the quoted judgment of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, demands the condemnation of total war which the Pastoral Constitution issued.(71) The American bishops repeat this condemnation on the basis of the categories both of proportionality and discrimination.

The way in which the bishops suggest the test of proportionality should be applied is wide-ranging, touching on the resort to arms, the conduct of war and the arms race itself:

'When confronting choices among specific military options, the question asked by proportionality is: once we take into account not only the military advantages that will be achieved by using this means but also all the harms reasonably expected to follow from using it, can its use still be justified?...It is of utmost importance, in assessing harms and the justice of accepting them, to think about the poor and the helpless, for they are usually the ones who have the least to gain and the most to lose when war's violence touches their lives.'(72)

Proportionality also colours the reaction the bishops have to the arms race. Even when the end is legitimate defence and the means to achieve it are not evil in themselves, there is the need to recognize

'attendant evils...the exorbitant costs, the general climate of insecurity generated, the possibility of accidental detonation of highly destructive weapons, the danger of error and miscalculation that could provoke retaliation and war...'(73)

A similar breadth of address is given to the category of discrimination. Here, the bishops see a lack of clarity in defining how it acts to protect non-combatants and non-military targets from intentional attack.

C4. The Value of Non-violence

Paragraphs #111-121

Finally, the bishops turn to the traditions of non-violence and pacifism. They defend the non-violent option by stressing that it is not passive about injustice, but exemplifies other means of resisting injustice. In a summary way, the roots of the non-violent vision in the early church are shown, and reference made to the impact of advocacy by non-Christians and non-Catholic Christians in this regard on the life of the American Church.(74)

The Letter refers to the thinking of the Council Fathers on conscientious objection, their call for governments to enact legal protection for those who adopted this position, 'the first time a call for legal protection of conscientious objection had appeared in a document of such prominence' and how this call had been echoed in the American hierarchy's own response to the Council, Human Life in our Day.(75)

The bishops stress the support from both the Council and the Popes for the pacifist option for individuals, and the contribution made by non-violent witness. It leads them to conclude this section with a reflection on the comparative contributions of the just war tradition and this newly validated form of witness. Just war teaching has been 'in possession' for 1500 years of Catholic thought, but the 'new moment' allows us to

see both approaches as 'distinct but interdependent methods of evaluating warfare'. Although they diverge they share a common presumption against force as a means of settling disputes:

'Both find their roots in the Christian theological tradition; each contributes to the full moral vision we need in pursuit of a human peace. We believe the two perspectives support and complement one another, each preserving the other from distortion. Finally, in an age of technological warfare, analysis from the viewpoint of non-violence and analysis from the viewpoint of the just war teaching often converge and agree in their opposition to methods of warfare which are in fact indistinguishable from total warfare.' (76)

CRITIQUE

Complementary or Contradictory? : The Just War and Nonviolence

Does this lengthy treatment of the tradition of reflection within the Catholic community on issues of war and peace contribute fresh insights? Or is its main intention to present the tradition in a manner calculated to contribute to the public policy debate, simply proffering accepted truths in a way which demonstrates their applicability to the details of current U.S. strategy? Critics of the Pastoral offer several contradictory responses. It can be argued that its real value is its mirroring of the energetic debate which accompanied its drafting, a debate itself part of a wider conversation within the church, and that it is this reflective character which gives the section its prime interest. This would also account for its stylistic unevenness.

Such a reading seems to be suggested by the last paragraph of the section. Here the bishops speak about the contribution made by the just war tradition and by the tradition of non-violence to the shaping of a Catholic, indeed Christian response. They present the two as complementary, mutually supportive, and indeed keeping each true to itself. Is this simply a rhetorical device or is there here the beginning of a true complementarity which would invite the church to a new model of engagement in the debate about war? Before examining this question we must first

sketch the broad lines of the Pastoral's thinking on the non-violent tradition per se.

The final text of the Pastoral does accord a high degree of recognition to non-violence. It is recognized as holding an authentic place within the tradition, and some would argue that it goes beyond any other authoritative church document in legitimizing it, even to the extent of seeing the bishops' treatment as a development of doctrine, however modest.(77)

Yet what the bishops have to say falls very short of making the Catholic church a 'peace church' in the conventional sense. While they see conscientious objection and non-violence in response to aggression as options available to Christians, they are clear that pacifism cannot be the basis for public policy. They give non-violence warm praise as a form of evangelical witness, but it is so in the teeth of the rights and obligations of the state to defend its citizens. The critical issue is self-evident. How does the pacifist position whether absolute or nuclear-selective then bear on public policy?

The value accorded to the non-violent tradition is much more muted in the final text than at times in the preceding drafts. Attention to the scriptural section in the First Draft, for example, led some commentators to conclude that the bishops were about to espouse doctrinal pacifism.(78) Although it was far more difficult to read the second draft in that light, the Rome Consultation revealed analogous deep reservations in the minds of some of the non-American participants:

'The Draft Pastoral Letter seems to presume that a certain dualism has existed in the whole tradition of the church with regard to the problem of war and peace: a tradition of non-violence on the same level as a tradition of acceptance of the just-war principles. Does this correspond to historical reality?'(79)

Clearly, that intervention assumed that it did not. Later, in examining the relationship further, the Schotte memo revealed hostility to talk of a 'double Catholic tradition', complained

that what the draft had to say about conscientious objection went beyond the Pastoral Constitution, and resisted the treatment of non-violent witness as an historical and continuous tradition.

The process in short reveals a modifying of the Letter's validation of non-violence in the face of criticism, and the explicit reassertion of the just war tradition as the framework within which public policy reflection can be carried out. If the explicit treatment of non-violence does not mark the emergence of a new voice, save in the prominence with which it is treated within the text, the major issue centres on the question of complementarity.

There are three ways of treating this. First, what the text says could be regarded as true. Thus critics as diverse in their judgements as Francis Meehan and James Dougherty welcome a move away from an argument on war and peace which is conducted within what Dougherty calls 'the dichotomous intellectual framework of pacifism versus just war.'⁽⁸⁰⁾ Both argue that to put the two in an antagonistic relationship is a false polarization. Although the advocates of each may be in conflict with the other the positions are in a healthily dialectical relationship.⁽⁸¹⁾ Meehan ⁽⁸²⁾ speaks of a 'duality', Dougherty of a 'dyadic' relationship in which both traditions are capable of mutual support and complementarity, each preserving the other from distortion. Dougherty points out that each has been approved by Vatican II and repeated statements of the N.C.C.B.

Meehan is highly critical of too easy a recourse to talk of complementary traditions, but he is sympathetic to the idea that the just war and non-violent traditions have a mutually corrective and amplifying function. He offers a way of reading the relationship as one of living tension, part of a dialectic which is mirrored in other parts of the church's reflection. Avoiding the contentious word 'dualism', Meehan settles for the notion of duality:

'...just war and nonviolence may be part of something deeper than the usual casuistic argument between two alternatives to

handling conflict. This deeper reality I call a duality. By this I mean simply that we are up against two modes of action which cannot be resolved into one on their own plane...there will always be the two, at least in theory, and they will neither be necessarily stark opposites nor will they collapse totally into one answer.'(83)

Meehan goes on to suggest that there is in this duality the seed of a new tradition, a development of doctrine out of which will evolve a Church posture of non-violence. We need not follow Meehan's argument here. What he does show well is that the mutually corrective role of the two traditions is possible and necessary:

'I am suggesting that the witness of nonviolence makes the use of just-war teaching more just and honest...the witness of refusing to use force has a power in the world which tends to reduce the use of force and to assure a more moderate and just application of whatever force is used...[the corollary is that] the just-war teaching's intent and value act in turn as a moderating influence upon the witness of nonviolence. In other words, any effort at Gospel purity must always have a certain down-to-earthness, lest the purity itself assume certain demonic tendencies'!(84)

Although he does not make use of such a term, this suggests that the complementarity is one in which each keeps the other true, but it is a complementarity of unequal proportions. It suggests that non-violence is a prophetic voice which is heard within a dominant view, that moulded by the just war tradition. Such a voice is not, in this view, one of contradiction, but a necessary part of the just war tradition's contribution to a theology of peace which The Challenge of Peace itself seeks to promote.

An alternative approach regards the image of complementarity as flawed. It can be attacked as the product of a liberalism which attempts to integrate the mutually irreconcilable, damaging the two traditions in the process or even corrupting them. That the advocates of each way share an overarching vision of peace need not be in doubt. What is in doubt is whether the form of moral reasoning each employs, the different practical resolutions this leads to can in any meaningful way be described as complementary.

'To attempt to join the two traditions in this way is to follow the procedure adopted by two men who find themselves facing a wide ravine while some danger behind them fast approaches. They are faced with the choice of attempting to leap the ravine or to turn and face the danger...Each failing to convince the other, they resolve their differences by deciding to jump halfway.'(85)

That is, can it be legitimate to confuse two separate ways of moral reasoning, squeezing pacifism into the intellectual framework of the just war without developing so elastic a view of the latter that it ceases to hold? This is certainly the view of Finn who, summoning to his aid John Courtney Murray's analysis of the just war tradition, argues that the bishops fail to make proper and best use of the just war tradition, and in the end do neither it nor nonviolence proper justice.(86)

Thirdly we can see the bishops' conclusions as an honest attempt to square the circle of mutually contradictory positions. Dougherty does not regard the attempt as honest because it is 'virtually impossible':

'The evolution in the tone of the pastoral letter from the pronounced pacifism of the first draft to a formal reaffirmation of the just war theory in the third draft resulted not only from debate and comments within the American Catholic community but also from the 1983 consultation at the Vatican...It was then up to the ad hoc committee to perform the virtually impossible task of reconciling the advice received in the Rome memorandum with the demands of the more than sixty American bishops who are members of Pax Christi for a resounding affirmation of the pacifist, nonviolent, and nonviolent resistance alternatives. As if walking a theological tightrope, the drafting committee did its best...' (87)

Finn suggests that the 'forced homogenization' of the two traditions was a temporary expedient, and that separation of the mutually incompatible elements will be inevitable. He suggests that this will become clear in the course of the way in which individual bishops implement the pastoral in their dioceses.

It would seem that it was not enough to talk of complementary functions without spending more time showing how this was to be accomplished. Is there a logic of development at work here, the beginnings of the move to the church's practical espousal of

nonviolence? This seems unlikely, despite the powerful caucus of Pax Christi bishops within the American hierarchy, and the vocal support from the peace lobby within the church. Is there perhaps a failure of nerve here, the result of which is the denial to either tradition of its independent contribution? Not quite. What this section does show is the impact the drafting process had on the final document, an impact which did not in this section advance its inner coherence. It also demonstrates the documents's value as a statement which does reflect the mind of the church, not in the conservative sense demanded by its opponents, but in that, at a time of transition and unclarity, the document not surprisingly presents a line of approach which is more muddled than nuanced. If the bishops truly see the pastoral as an invitation to dialogue, and there seems every reason to accept their word on this, then the question of the relative contribution of these two traditions is one which demands more study and reflection. To expect that a document emerging from a major church, moreover one which in its production opened itself to the scrutiny of the community, could take a radically different line is unrealistic. What it might have done was to come clean on the unresolved question, to be more explicit on the unresolved areas of debate. In this sense the participatory process militated against a clear presentation. While it did not quite set the agenda for further debate, it is an excellent reflector of the minds of the church, if such a thing can be conceived, and a way of understanding where the arena of future debate might lie. This is well-expressed by Charles Curran:

'since there are a number of legitimate positions within the church, the church itself must often be seen as a community of moral discourse rather than a provider of answers for its members in all such cases.' (88)

SECTION II

WAR AND PEACE IN THE MODERN WORLD: PROBLEMS AND PRINCIPLESPARAGRAPHS #122-199.

Introductory critique:

'Discerning the signs of the times' :
the context, the audience and the task.

In # 122-141 the Pastoral is at its most explicit in offering a rationale for the initiative the bishops have taken. Here the Pastoral is located very concretely in relationship to its context and audience. As has been suggested at varying stages in this study the Pastoral Letter is a document of many layers. Such complexity is inevitable given the multiple contexts out of which the document comes, and the multiple audiences the bishops seek to address. In this section this emerges with great clarity, and raises the question of why within those contexts, ecclesial and social, the time was gauged to be ripe for the bishops to initiate the process which led to The Challenge of Peace? What signs did they discern and how did they set about responding?

The constant motif in this section is that of the 'new moment'. The context in which the bishops have worked and to which they now offer this teaching initiative is marked by newness.

First, the document stresses that the Catholic community and the Holy See in particular has addressed the issue of nuclear war from the outset. Far from being a tardy entrant on the reflective scene, the church in its moral address has been an active participant. The 'new moment' is thus part of an unfolding tradition, an emergent continuity. The bishops' initiative is thus taken in the context of an established body of church teaching and reflection, but far from being restricted

by the heritage it will self-consciously develop that reflection in the context of the American polity.

Secondly, there is a 'new moment' within the world of nuclear strategic thinking and planning with, for example, the proposed deployment of the MX missile system. The context here is one of learning. The bishops by the research of the ad hoc committee gain insight into the outlines, and in some instances, the detail, of nuclear strategic planning. The address to the public officials may not be so explicit within the Pastoral itself, but dialogue with them, often seen as challenge, was a marked feature of the process.

Thirdly, the 'new moment' is evidenced by the activity of public opinion in the nuclear debate in a new and vivid way. Against the backdrop of the nuclear freeze initiative and the mass demonstrations in Western Europe, the bishops speak of a 'sharply increased awareness'(89) among public citizens, an awareness of the contours of nuclear policy which they imply has led to the loss of public consensus. If this were not so, building a new public consensus would hardly be required. The bishops seek to help build the new consensus by drawing on the fruits of detailed research and the distinctive Catholic tradition of moral reflection.

All of this makes the document complex. These discrete contexts, the insights the bishops draw from them in their learning, and the way each is addressed in the teaching, all surface in that part of the text which follows.

INTRODUCTION

Paragraphs #122-125

The bishops begin with a strong statement of the newness of the situation which the world faces in the fact of nuclear warfare as it is currently planned. The facts confront the established tradition of moral reflection which expresses itself in both just war teaching and the tradition of non-violence with a 'unique challenge'(90) which itself raises 'new moral challenges'. In responding to that task the bishops assert their right to initiate. Thus, it will not be enough to repeat what has been said in the past. The need is

'to consider anew whether and how our religious-moral tradition can assess, direct, contain, and, we hope, help to eliminate the threat posed to the human family by the nuclear arsenals of the world'.(91)

This new challenge is not one which demands only a moral response. It raises a fundamental religious question which Pope John Paul II alluded to in a speech at Hiroshima, namely, that the nuclear arsenals make possible the destruction of the planet:

'In the nuclear arsenals of the United States or the Soviet Union alone, there exists a capacity to do something no other age could imagine: we can threaten the entire planet...the moral issue at stake in nuclear war involves the meaning of sin in its most graphic dimension. Every sinful act is a confrontation of the creature and the creator. Today the destructive potential of the nuclear powers threatens the human person, the civilization we have slowly constructed, and even the created order itself.'(92)

This apocalyptic picture, the bishops write, is indeed a 'cosmic drama', and reveals the precarious nature of the present time.

Alongside the signs of danger is a sign of hope, for at least the danger is now recognized. The danger of the nuclear arms race has led to a public debate in many countries, and

'what has been accepted for years with almost no question is now being subjected to the sharpest criticism.'(93)

In this new evaluation many elements are at play, but one is the gospel vision of peace:

'The nuclear age has been the theater of our existence for almost four decades; today it is being evaluated with a new perspective. For many the leaven of the gospel and the light of the Holy Spirit create the decisive dimension of this new perspective.'(94)

A. THE NEW MOMENT

Paragraphs #126-138

The bishops then go on to spell out the main feature of that new evaluation:

'Today the opposition to the arms race is no longer selective or sporadic, it is widespread and sustained. The danger and destructiveness of nuclear weapons are understood and resisted with a new urgency and intensity.'(95)

This new intensity of public opposition to the arms race does not imply that the Church has a simply reactive role. The bishops point to the judgment of Pope Paul VI on the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima,(96) the Holy See's submission to the United Nations in 1976 (97) and Pope John Paul II's commissioning of a study by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (98) as evidence of an established pattern of church concern, of how

'papal teaching has consistently addressed the folly and danger of the arms race'.(99)

If the church has consistently addressed the issue, the bishops acknowledge that the new perception of the public is due principally to the contribution of the scientific and medical community.

But for the church it is not enough to say again what has been said before. Just as the Academy in its report asserted that 'prevention is essential for control'(100) and that talk about

winning or even surviving a nuclear war was a reflection of medical unreality, so the church in its moral teaching must not limit itself to concentration on limiting the effects of war, since the possibilities for placing moral and political limits are minimal:

'...we must refuse to legitimate the idea of nuclear war. Such a refusal will require not only new ideas and new vision, but what the gospel calls conversion of the heart.'
(101)

CRITIQUE:

The most striking feature in this preliminary section is the perception of the demands of the 'new moment'. It proves rather a slippery concept, we may suspect, for the bishops find themselves in something of a dilemma. On the one hand, they feel obliged to assert the longstanding wisdom of the church's reflection, and in particular to point to the Holy See's consistency in relation to the nuclear arms question: on the other they support the fresh teaching initiative they have taken by referring to the newness of the current situation with its demands for new response. Is it possible to be faithful to both? This dilemma leads us to consider the relative strength of the reactive and proactive strands in the bishops' initiative for here they are vulnerable to criticism. What is the appropriate balance for the church to strike as it seeks to discern the signs of the times, to respond to the situation it sees in a way which is in continuity with its tradition, and yet is pastorally responsive to what is new.

Some light was shed on this question by Cardinal Bernardin in an address he delivered at Fordham University in New York some seven months after the Pastoral had been issued.(102)

Bernardin's main concern was to suggest that the Pastoral was part of an emerging body of teaching which promoted a consistent ethic of life, the so-called 'seamless garment'. At the beginning of the lecture he reflected upon the significance of

The Challenge of Peace in public debate. Among his concerns he had this to say about the timeliness of the Pastoral:

'The letter was written at a time it called a "new moment" in the nuclear age. The new moment is a mix of public perceptions and policy proposals. The public sense of the fragility of our security system is today a palpable reality. The interest in the TV showing of 'The Day After' is an example of how the public is taken by the danger of our present condition. But the new moment is also a product of new ideas or at least the shaking of the foundation under old ideas... [it] ...is an open moment in the strategic debate. Ideas are under scrutiny and established policies are open to criticism in a way we have not seen since the late 1950's.'(103)

He instanced the nuclear freeze initiative, and the debate about the MX missile as signs of debate about the direction of nuclear policy. The real public task was to transform public debate into a public consensus which had not yet emerged. To contribute to that consensus was the prime purpose of the Pastoral, The Challenge of Peace:

'The fundamental contribution of 'The Challenge of Peace', I believe, is that we have been part of a few central forces which have created the new moment. We have helped to shape the debate; now we can help to frame a new consensus concerning nuclear policy...It is urgent that a consensus be shaped which will move us beyond our present posture. The pastoral letter has opened space in the public debate for a consideration of the moral factor. How we use the moral questions, that is, how we relate them to the strategic and political elements, is the key to our contribution to the new moment.'(104)

What Bernardin is suggesting is that the new moment is one of opportunity, an open moment, which is characterized by a public mood, a mood which has issued in a willingness to question long-cherished nuclear orthodoxy and which encourages a scrutiny of nuclear policy. The new moment offers the possibility of a new consensus in the public domain which the bishops have a distinctive and leading role in helping shape. Not the least important contribution they make is one of defining the key questions. Bernardin here suggests a blend of the reactive and proactive role in the public debate; discerning the public mood, reading the possibilities offered by the new moment and acting to contribute to a new consensus.

However, it is precisely on the question of the balance of action and reaction that Weigel's criticism of the bishops is targeted, in particular the claim that the bishops were more influenced than influencing.(105)

He argues that this influence on the bishops is evidenced in four themes in the Letter: the impact of the 'essentially pagan theme of survivalism' advanced by activists like Jonathan Schell and Helen Caldicott, the 'nuclear Cassandra'; the failure to develop a thoroughgoing treatment of 'just cause' in relation to Soviet totalitarianism as was done for example by the German hierarchy; the development of a strategic vision which is strongly influenced by the orthodoxies of the 'institutional arms fraternity'; and a 'limp' treatment of world-order issues which Weigel sees as key elements in the Catholic socio-ethical tradition.

Weigel sees the bishops in effect entering into a voluntary captivity, abandoning the treasure of the tradition in favour of the current shibboleths of certain factions within the U.S. political elite, and in particular the more liberal wing of the arms control fraternity.(106)

Having argued that the 'new moment' demands a response, the bishops then set out (107) a provisional conclusion, namely that the 'no' to nuclear war which they feel obliged to articulate must be both definitive and decisive. They then sketch the process which informed that conclusion, and begin to describe the distinctive features of their approach.

They first address the question of moral methodology. Primary among their concerns is the need to defend the specific nature of the teaching they attempt. They make explicit their consciousness of being part of a tradition in which moral principles have been 'related' to concrete problems. The

precise nature of that relation is not explored, but the bishops argue it is not possible to remain with the simple restatement of general principles or the repetition of the well-known outlines of the ethics of war. Specificity is therefore required of teaching, and moreover one which will go beyond what has already been articulated. Thus, the twin themes of specificity and development are linked.

Such specificity is possible because of the process which in this regard has been one of investigative theology. 'A sobering and perplexing experience', it has led them to consult with 'a broad spectrum of advisors of varying persuasions' on the character of weapons systems, strategic doctrine, and the consequences of use.(108)

Consultation has led them to listen to those who protest against the existing nuclear strategy as well as those who bear responsibility for it. Out of the consultation and their own reflection the bishops make a judgment which rejects nuclear war, a rejection which will not be left baldly stated but will be related to the specific features of strategic policy.

Following a well-worn track in Catholic teaching the pastoral sets out the international political context in which the nuclear superpower relationship is played out. The absence of an international central authority and the existence of nuclear technology led to the present danger. The present is then one of danger, one of folly, and its impact on ordinary people is damaging. It distorts economic priorities and causes psychological harm.(109)

Finally in this section, the bishops ask how the rejection of nuclear war is to be translated into a new direction, a new national policy, and a new international system. The system of deterrence is flawed. It leads to the development of an unintelligible strategy in which military preparations on a vast scale are deployed in order that they will never be used. It leads to a view of security which, far from keeping affairs

secret, is based on revealing facts to the adversary. It runs counter to the sovereignty of the nation-state, for the superpower arsenals make that unreal. It is a political paradox and moreover, it strains moral thinking:

'in brief, the danger of the situation is clear; but how to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, how to assess deterrence, and how to delineate moral responsibility in the nuclear age are less clearly seen or stated.' (110)

B. RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP AND THE PUBLIC DEBATE

Paragraphs #139-141

Here the bishops spell out the beginnings of an answer to that question, one which returns to the rationale for the issuing of the Pastoral. The bishops function as 'moral teachers', which in this regard they conceive as a vocation to help form public opinion with a clear determination to resist the resort to nuclear war as an instrument of national policy. (111) (This aim is supported by reference to the Pope's 'World Day of Peace Message'.)

The forming of public opinion is a feature of the 'new moment'. Indeed, there is both a 'creative opportunity and a moral imperative' to examine the relationship between public opinion and public policy. In a short paragraph the bishops suggest that the role of public opinion is essentially one of constraint, (112) The distinctive task of the church is spelled out:

'We believe religious leaders have a task in concert with public officials, analysts, private organizations, and the media to set the limits beyond which our military policy should not move in word or action.' (113)

Part of the limit they propose immediately is the end to rhetoric about winnable war, and survivable nuclear exchanges. Inviting a public moral dialogue the bishops then set out the structure for the rest of the Pastoral.

CRITIQUE:

Explicit treatment of the role of the church in public policy in the text of the Pastoral is relatively brief, and it is important to pause here to penetrate the assumptions which underlie the text.

At first sight the bishops seem to suggest that their role in public policy formation is indirect. That is, the purpose of

the pastoral is not to win the hearts and minds of policymakers, to persuade them by the force of argument how the rejection of nuclear war is to be enfolded in new policy creation. The Challenge of Peace, this would suggest, is not a document whose principal address is to the political elite. Rather it aims to address a much wider constituency, namely the body politic. This seems the impact of their desire to form public opinion, to help create a climate of thought and attitude which will set limits on the freedom of the policy makers in relation to nuclear weapons. It is an indirect address, but one which is very ambitious.

Light is shed on this way of teaching in a lecture which Bernardin gave at Chicago in January 1984.(114) He spoke at length about the impact of the church on public policy, and on the relationship between policy and public opinion. In these reflections the distinctiveness of the political culture of America can be seen. Bernardin argues that it is the American context which demands that the church's role in relation to the public life of the nation be closely bound up with the development of public opinion. Thus the church's task is intimately related to its place in a democratic structure where a high value is given to the engagement of the citizen in the political culture.

Although he does not develop it further, the force of the argument would suggest that other models of engagement would be required elsewhere, that in an undemocratic culture the church's engagement would be different, its role in relation to public policy perhaps more one of challenge, or if that model proved impossible, of simple engagement with the faithful in establishing an inner culture inimical to prevailing socio-political norms. In a democratic culture such an approach is unnecessary. Thus, we might see that the kind of teaching the bishops offer reflects the freedom and possibilities inherent in American democratic culture. Such a view suggests that alongside the universally applicable, and therefore general, teaching of the church goes a teaching which is intimately

related to its culture, alive to its distinctive character and traditions. Moreover, this would not be simply a question of teaching style or tone, but would radically affect the nature of the address. That is not to say that democratic cultures offer the optimum environment for teaching. Indeed, it might be argued that teaching in a democratic culture has specific dangers and limitations.

Bernardin acknowledges that the power of public opinion is limited, especially in a democratic culture which is 'complex'. Here a crucial danger of specific teaching is revealed. In a pluralist democracy where a range of attitudes and opinions are canvassed, and where public opinion is not univocal, not simple to characterize, where does the distinction lie between the formation of public opinion and canvassing, between building a widely shared consensus and acting as a lobbying agency?

It is precisely on this question, the balance of action and reaction that some of the most savage criticism has been directed. For critics like George Weigel

...what does seem more, rather than less certain is that in the short term the bishops' primary impact has not been to help launch a reconstituted and better discussion on the problem of peace, security and freedom, but to lend the weight of their public credibility to factions within the already existing argument.'(115)

What Weigel's criticism shows starkly is the risk the bishops took in moving into the public arena, open to the arguments being advanced there, and willing to move beyond a hortatory teaching style to one which sought to be specific and rooted in the realities of space and time.

Weigel does less than justice to the avowed aim of the bishops or indeed the success of their attempt. The Pastoral is precisely what it claims to be, a document rooted in the pastoral realities experienced by the bishops in their community, and designed to address the specific concerns voiced to them. Specificity brought attendant risks, as did the process which the bishops established from the first. It would

have been surprising if the concerns voiced by individual bishops, and the level of support for the nuclear freeze initiatives by individual members of the hierarchy, had found no reflection in the letter. If the bishops did fall victim to the ethos of the liberal establishment, they seem to have had few illusions about the dominance of a rather different political ethos in the current Administration. This may account for Bernardin's according public opinion an essentially restraining or limiting function rather than a prescriptive one, a view reflected in the Pastoral itself: thus

'we seek to encourage a public attitude which sets stringent limits on the kind of actions our own government and other governments will take on nuclear policy. We believe religious leaders have a task in concert with public officials, analysts, private organizations, and the media to set the limits beyond which our military policy should not move in word or action.'(116)

Having established their task, the bishops then establish four priorities, four 'questions' on which they reflect and which they suggest are the basis for a 'public moral dialogue'.

C.THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Paragraphs #142-161

The section begins with a short reference to the non-violent tradition. One of its insights is seen as illuminating the Christian community as a whole, namely that the attempt to use lethal force 'selectively' and 'restrictively' is an illusion. Nuclear weapons demonstrate this truth in a way previously unknown.(117)

This insight which leads the non-violent tradition to its conclusion, the renunciation of all force, is also of importance for that tradition which acknowledges the legitimacy of the use of force. In judging the use of force, the key categories of

'selectivity' and 'restriction' which the bishops employ are in fact analogous to the just war categories of discrimination and proportion. Judged by these categories

'some important elements of contemporary nuclear strategies move beyond the limits of moral justification'.(118)

Invoking the just war tradition the bishops find certain aspects of both U.S. and Soviet strategy deficient.

This unequivocal judgment is the result of the process which led the bishops to their conclusions. Hence the judgments emerge from the process rather than being self-evident from the tradition. It is the submissions made by the expert witnesses which lead the bishops to their conclusions. Crediting their conscientization both to the personal testimony of public officials and to research findings, they conclude that there is an 'overwhelming probability'(119) that a major nuclear exchange would have no limits. As for the effects of a 'limited' nuclear war the bishops draw on the findings of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences on the widespread effects of a counterforce series of strikes.

Thus, it would seem that the insight both of the non-violent tradition and the just war tradition, and here it is difficult not to see them as parallel in the bishops' minds, is that the bishops' conclusions about the use of nuclear weapons will be informed by a profound unease about the issue of control. From this judgment will flow their attempt to build a barrier, which is in part moral and in part political, against any use of nuclear weapons.

Moral Principles and Policy Choices

The unease or scepticism the bishops evince is developed as they examine three cases of use: counter-population warfare, the initiation of nuclear conflict, and the idea of 'limited' nuclear war.

1. Counter-population Warfare

Paragraphs #147-149

The bishops begin with the principle of noncombatant immunity for they wish to reassert this principle, and to do it in such a way that it is their 'first word'. Counter-population warfare, whether nuclear or conventional, is condemned unequivocally.

(120) The principle of discrimination is an important one within the 'ethic of war', and one which has been subjected to particular stress by the nuclear age. The text refers ahead to specific aspects of U.S. policy, content at this stage to reassert the principle. In reasserting the principle the focus of the American statement is precise.

Violating the principle of discrimination, counter-population warfare is not only condemned but more closely defined. First, they name certain groups within the civil population which always retain the right of immunity from direct military attack.(121) Moreover, and critically when the bishops address the issue of deterrence, the Letter judges that there can be no moral justification for intending to use weapons against innocent persons. Intention and use are here seen as coinherent. Secondly, the prohibition of counter-population warfare is seen as extending to retaliatory action. Enemy cities may not be subjected to nuclear strike even if U.S. cities have suffered such attacks.(122) These judgments are strengthened by the clear prohibition of any Christian to carry out orders which have this deliberate aim, a judgment backed by the Pastoral Constitution. (123)

2. The initiation of Nuclear War

Paragraphs #150-156

Having dealt with the illegitimacy of attack on civilian population centres, the Pastoral turns to the moral issues surrounding the initiation of nuclear war. Their judgment is crisp:

'We do not perceive any situation in which the deliberate initiation of nuclear warfare, on however restricted a scale, can be morally justified. Non-nuclear attacks by another state must be resisted by other than nuclear means.'(124)

The bishops refer to the political debate on the question, a debate which they see as having a significant moral dimension. They draw attention to the fact that 'first use' is an established indeed central part of NATO strategy, although one exposed to debate and challenge, a debate which is signalled in a footnote.(125)

What distinctively moral dimension do the bishops identify here? The source of their conclusion lies within their listening. They refer directly to the contribution of expert witnesses who convinced them that under conditions of war the difficulties of limiting the use of nuclear weapons are very great. This would lead in expert judgment to the impossibility of effective battlefield control, the expansion of the targets beyond the military, and the inexorable soaring of the level of civilian casualties. Moreover,

'former public officials have testified that it is improbable that any nuclear war would actually be kept limited...the danger of escalation is so great that it would be morally unjustifiable to initiate nuclear war in any form. The danger is rooted not only in the technology of our weapons systems but in the weakness and sinfulness of human communities. We find the moral responsibility of beginning nuclear war not justified by rational political objectives.'(126)

Their judgment therefore is not based simply on an analysis of strategic goals and weapons systems, but on the human dimension of how actual wars are fought. This leads to a radical scepticism as to whether limits within nuclear war can be observed, a scepticism which leads them to judge that the initiation of nuclear war fails the test of proportionality.

This highly controversial series of judgments, which goes beyond the texts of the Council or previous American statements, is flagged in a footnote as precisely that, a series of judgments which do not carry the same authoritative weight as the

principles from which they are deduced.(127) Nevertheless, the bishops allow themselves the opportunity to make specific recommendations. The resort to nuclear weapons to counter a conventional attack is judged morally unacceptable, thus opposing the conventional NATO understanding of 'first use'.(128) While recognizing that to make public a 'no first use' pledge would rob NATO of the assumed deterrent effect of its current refusal to do so, the bishops urge this upon NATO in tandem with the development of an adequate alternative defence posture.

The judgements the bishops make here are undergirded by one constant, namely the conviction that the initiation of nuclear war at any level of engagement involves the crossing of a threshold, the

'transgressing [of] a fragile barrier - political, psychological, and moral - which has been constructed since 1945'.(129)

The bishops marshal expert opinion, the judgment of former public officials, the recognition of human frailty and sin, the just war tradition and now the post-1945 nuclear strategic orthodoxy to warrant a strong opposition to the first use of nuclear weaponry. This mix of judgments seeks to strengthen the barrier against resort to nuclear weapons, a task which Hehir identifies as one of the Letter's general themes.(130)

3. Limited Nuclear War

Paragraphs #157-161

The third case of use the bishops address is that of 'limited nuclear war', that is, retaliatory use in a limited counterforce exchange. Here they refer to the new demands made by the existence of nuclear weapons on human judgment. The policy debate, they argue, is inconclusive, offering only hypothetical projections about the course of a nuclear exchange. To speak of limited war is not simply to speak of technical questions concerning weapons and strategy. It is to enter a new arena of human experience where there are no certainties:

'The debate should include the psychological and political significance of crossing the boundary from the conventional to the nuclear arena...to cross this divide is to enter a world where we have no experience of control, much testimony against its possibility, and therefore no moral justification for submitting the human community to this risk...' (131)

CRITIQUE

Bishops and Theologians

In what has been decribed above we have tried to be alert to two of the contexts out of which the Pastoral emerged, the context of the Catholic magisterium and the context of the American political establishment. One other context should be noted here, that of the American Catholic theological community. Later we will reflect upon some aspects of the dynamic between bishop and theologian, and the opportunities opened up by a redefined relationship for the development of a new teaching ministry within the church. How does what the bishops have to say in this section correspond to the thinking of American Catholic scholars? It is not possible here to speak of influence upon the Pastoral itself, for there is too little information to offer anything other than conjecture. Richard McCormick suggests that there is such a correspondence, or rather that the bishops' argument on the use of nuclear weapons finds a ready parallel in Catholic theorists, although the bishops stopped short of condemning all use. He writes:

'there is a growing conviction (popular, strategic, moral-theological) that any use of nuclear weapons is morally irresponsible.'(132)

It is a point of view which is shared by many others. Among them are Francis Winters (133), David Hollenbach (134) and Charles Curran.(135) What follows is only a brief acknowledgement of the views within the theological community on the use of nuclear war, in an attempt to show where the key question lies. There are two approaches, the 'absolutist' and the 'contextual'.

There are those who develop the argument from what is known about the reality of nuclear exchanges. For some sharing this approach there has been a shift in position on the licity of using nuclear weapons.

Francis Winters is one such. Having argued in the past for the legitimacy of the use of nuclear weapons in counterstrategic defence, he now opposes all use, but does so in a way which seeks not to confront but to build a consensus between the Catholic community and the government. His argument is that nuclear war is no war in the commonly understood way of thinking, being beyond control and failing the commonsense criterion of being able to be won. It therefore offends the fundamental criterion of justice. Winters argues that the contribution of the Pastoral is in part to fill a vacuum in strategic thought. Rather than being simply a statement inimical to current strategic orthodoxy, it develops an alternative political and military strategy to build security within the constraints of conscience. He writes:

'...war must admit of being won...military hostilities that can neither be won nor lost are not war. They cannot be an instrument of justice...By general and official agreement, nuclear hostilities cannot be won or lost. Over the months the bishops spent preparing the pastoral letter, the views of the most senior officials of the government, everyone but the President himself, were sedulously sought out...One of the great paradoxes of this preparatory period is that the government not only disclaimed any ability to control nuclear war, but every responsible official in the government said repeatedly and candidly that nuclear war cannot be won or lost in any recognizable sense.'(136)

A similar conclusion is reached by David Hollenbach, whose 'no use' position is argued with rather less elan. Given the ever-present risk of escalation, the employment of nuclear weapons is 'irrational from a political view as well as unacceptable from the perspective of basic moral values and prima facie duties.'(137)

The argument which such writers unfold is a mix of judgements based on a prudent evaluation of the likely outcome and the application of just war criteria.

But it would not be accurate to suggest that there exists a consensus within the American Catholic theological community on

this issue, for a different conclusion is reached by theorists like William O'Brien (138) and John Langan.(139)

Both men reject a position which rules out any and all use of nuclear weapons. O'Brien sets aside the criterion of discrimination which he holds to be a 'relative prescription', in favour of proportionality. Within the limits of that criterion O'Brien can envisage the use of counterforce weapons, with the fundamental proviso that the whole context of the decision-making is attended to. Although a strong moral presumption exists against use, nuclear warfare cannot be regarded as intrinsically evil.

O'Brien can posit the possibility of the use of tactical, theatre or even strategic counterforce weapons and he pleads for realism, based here on the assessment which must always be made in an explicit and particular context.

This distinction between what Langan calls the 'contextualist' and 'absolutist' approaches is fairly subtle. Both assert the continued applicability of just war criteria, even when subtly altered, and reflect a strong presumption against use.

Winters, and in this respect the ad hoc committee operated very similarly, accords value to the knowledge gained from government and military sources. Thus, judgements about the possibility of establishing limits, the dangers of escalation and so on are in part the product of a listening method. In this, Winters would be sympathetic to Hehir's reading of the bishops' intention to build a barrier against use, even if they find themselves unable to denounce it unequivocally.

O'Brien seems rather to respond to the challenge posed by John Courtney Murray in a famous essay, in which he argued that it was precisely the task of the Catholic moral theorist to envisage the use of nuclear weapons.(140)

NUCLEAR PACIFISTS MANQUÉS?

How near did the bishops come to a straightforwardly 'nuclear pacifist' position? Is that not in the end where the logic of their political and strategic analysis leads?

Such a commitment almost came about in the course of the Chicago meeting which endorsed the Pastoral.(141) Archbishop Quinn offered an amendment, Amendment 68, which sought to include a categorical opposition on moral grounds to any use of nuclear weapons. Quinn's amendment was passed, supported by Mahony who saw it as a legitimate extension of the Letter's argument. Later in the meeting the vote was rescinded at Bernardin's insistence that 'a note of ambiguity' must remain. This note of ambiguity is sounded by the bishops' stopping short of judging every conceivable use of nuclear weapons as a *malum in se*, an intrinsic evil. Scepticism about the moral acceptability of nuclear warfare does not develop into a straightforward condemnation of all use, a judgement which would have had the support both of the 'absolute' and 'nuclear' pacifist community.(142)

Why was this ambiguity necessary? To embrace a position of nuclear pacifism would have been to set the American hierarchy at odds with Rome. Such a substantial development of Catholic thinking within a public document went beyond the limits of the possible for the ad hoc committee.

There is furthermore in this section a recognition of the part played by ambiguity in the logic of deterrence. To espouse a moral position outlawing all use would have been to pull the ideological rug from under the NATO strategy, rendering deterrence an empty bluff, devoid of credibility.

The 'note of ambiguity' in Bernardin's phrase,(143) or the 'centimeter of ambiguity' in Hehir's (144) is thus necessary on ecclesiological and political grounds.

This may account for the bishops' reasoning, but when does ambiguity contribute to the making of subtle and careful argument, and when is it a failure of nerve?

D. DETERRENCE IN PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE

Paragraphs #162-199

The Pastoral then swings away from examination of the use of nuclear weapons to the overarching strategy within which decisions are made, the strategy of deterrence, a political fact at the heart of the relationship between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., 'currently the most dangerous dimension of the nuclear arms race.'(145)

1. The Concept and Development of Deterrence Policy

The Pastoral introduces its treatment of deterrence by sketching the way in which deterrence policy has developed since 1945, and introducing some key phrases from within the technical debate to a wider audience. The bishops accept a definition of deterrence as

'dissuasion of a potential adversary from initiating an attack or conflict, often by the threat of of unacceptable retaliatory damage'.(146)

Moreover they see such deterrence as the core-element of the policy of both superpowers. They thus accord an identity of strategic intent to both parties, an intent which is expressed in planning for a strategic response which is fireproof, while avoiding the deployment of potentially firststrike weaponry. The bishops then draw a distinction between 'declaratory' and 'action' policy, that is, the distinction between what governments say they will do and what it is their privy intention to do. They offer us a scattering of phrases familiar from the public debate, to show the different declaratory policies adopted by the U.S. over the years, a vocabulary which conceals the real continuity of American policy.

Having made these political judgments the Pastoral turns to that part of the debate it wishes to engage. In order to offer a moral assessment of deterrence it proposes to deal with the facts of the deterrent. In particular this means study of the realities of targeting doctrine; the development of such doctrine and whether changes in it yield new questions; the framework of U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations, and the identification of the key moral questions.(147)

2. The Moral Assessment of Deterrence

Paragraphs #167-177

The bishops argue that the newness of nuclear deterrence was only slowly appreciated by both strategists and moral thinkers. At the heart of deterrence lies a paradox. The paradox was identified by the Pastoral Constitution but no specific judgment on deterrence was made by the Council Fathers. The political climate in which deterrence is the guiding strategic reality is marked by tensions and disputes, even if it is accepted as the most effective way of maintaining peace of a sort. There are tensions between our experience of a quasi-peace and that genuine peace which promotes stable international life, and there are contradictions between policies which demand that resources be devoted to destructive capacity while urgent needs for development go unmet. The fundamental difficulty is the lack of agreement by those within the political-moral debate as to the effect of deterrence, and whether it has in fact contributed to the absence of nuclear war.

The bishops then offer a selection of texts which have influenced Catholic thinking. Among the statements they highlight their own pastoral letter To Live in Christ Jesus of 1976, and the contribution of Cardinal Krol to the SALT II process in Congress. They give a place to Pope John Paul II's speech at the United Nations which, while according deterrence a degree of acceptance, sets it firmly in the broad context of the search for progressive disarmament.(148)

In their treatment of deterrence the key element for the bishops is that 'peace of a sort' which deterrence at best provides. We should note, however, that the bishops reflect on the fact that we cannot tell what precisely has been demonstrated to have been provided by deterrence. 'Peace of a sort', even if it is the best that can be hoped for, is characterized by two factors. Intrinsic to the operation of deterrence is the possession of nuclear weapons, the growth of the arms race and the danger of nuclear proliferation. Even as the bishops recognize the need to protect the independence and freedom of nations, they see in deterrence a reflection of the radical distrust which marks the international community.

In this treatment the bishops seem unclear as to whether deterrence is or is not a contributor to 'peace of a sort'. At one and the same time it can be seen to promote stability, yet its own dynamic is inimical to the creation of international trust. This part of the Letter is a direct response to the important papal judgment on deterrence which has come to have such a defining role in relation to the deterrence debate. The bishops reaffirm the main argument in the papal speech, that deterrence is not an end in itself, and then begin their examination of concrete policy choices. This examination demanded enquiry to establish the character of U.S. deterrence strategy, and then the application of moral principles. From the range of possible questions the bishops identify two to which they will give detailed consideration: targeting doctrine, and the relationship of deterrence strategy and nuclear war-fighting capability to the likely prevention of war.

CRITIQUE:

In making their 'moral assessment' of deterrence what conclusions do the bishops feel able to make, and is there anything in that conclusion which leads the debate within the church into new territory?

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the papal contribution to the deterrence debate has dictated the boundaries of the debate. The twin papal concerns of the conditioned acceptance of deterrence and the long-established concern to encourage a pattern of cooperation within the world community animate the Pastoral's approach in this section. It is clearly the intention of the Pastoral to leave room for a morally justified deterrent. Yet as the detailed judgements on American strategic policy are offered it is more difficult to see how that moral character can be proposed.(149) If there is to be moral room for the deterrent how much room is it in fact to be accorded? Is it possible to threaten to do what you cannot do morally? Can we defend the Pastoral from the criticism of William O'Brien:

'...the bishops having marched up to the great issues of deterrence and war, flinched at the critical moment and begged the questions that they had raised about these issues...[the] Pastoral Letter accords the problems of deterrence and war an extremely lengthy analysis, reflecting an extraordinary drafting effort, but it abandons the enterprise at the critical point. The Bishops leave the faithful and the interested public, as well as themselves, with serious unfinished business.'(150)

The question is, given the bishops' avowed intention, namely to contribute to the public policy debate, when do we move from the genuine contribution to the evasive tactic? Granted that the Pastoral operates within limits, does it in the end promise more than it delivers?

Moral Principles and Policy Choices

Paragraphs #178-199

In seeking to apply moral principles to avowed strategic goals the Pastoral deals first with targeting doctrine, with particular regard to its impact on civilian casualties. The bishops begin here for the issue of targeting determines what would happen if nuclear weapons were ever to be used. The bishops are clear that not all that happens in the name of 'deterrence' is morally acceptable:

'There are moral limits to deterrence policy as well as to policy regarding use. Specifically, it is not morally acceptable to kill the innocent as part of a strategy of deterring nuclear war'.(151)

The bishops regard as a prime concern the search for elucidation of U.S. targeting policy.

The bishops then indicate what their 'listening' phase produced. They cite the responses which they have received, both 'official' and 'unofficial', and the series of clarifications of policy by U.S. officials. Only one is cited explicitly, the letter of William Clark to Bernardin of January 15th 1983. Clark reassured the bishops that the strategic policy of the U.S. did not involve the targeting of the Soviet civilian population as such, nor intend the use of nuclear weapons in such a way that civilian population centres were deliberately targeted. Thus reassured, the bishops recognize, 'in principle at least', that such statements correspond to the just war criterion in regard to deterrence policy, the immunity of non-combatants.(152)

The Pastoral goes on to consider targeting against the criterion of proportionality. Alongside the question of the intent to kill the innocent goes the moral question of the indirect or unintentional killing of innocents. This problem arises because modern military facilities and production centres exist alongside civilian residential and industrial areas. The text quotes the U.S. Single Integrated Operational Plan as identifying no fewer than 60 military targets in the city of Moscow alone.(153) Thus loss of civilian life on a massive scale is unavoidable. They cite Administration officials' agreement that:

'...once any substantial numbers of weapons were used, the civilian casualty levels would quickly become truly catastrophic, and that even with attacks limited to 'military' targets, the number of deaths in a substantial exchange would be almost indistinguishable from what might occur if civilian centers had been deliberately and directly struck'.(154)

Asking what is disproportionate is a necessary corrective to the

limited usefulness of noncombatant immunity as the only challenge to a 'moral policy' for the use of nuclear weapons. The challenge which is posed by the demand of proportionality is not to be met by the development of more accurate weapons which would cause less collateral damage. The mesh of proportion also must be applied to the cumulative effect of many explosions, however accurately targeted, and the long-term effects of social and economic destruction.

The bishops then express a fear about the link between war-fighting capabilities and deterrence strategy. Counterforce targeting, while preferable from the point of view of protecting civilians, must not promote the idea that nuclear war can be subject to rational or moral limits. Moreover a counterforce strategy, they argue, may in itself be destabilizing.(155)

Thus, noncombatant immunity is the first but not the only concern the bishops have. They make explicit a determination to resist legitimizing anything which allows deterrence to be other than a promoter of

'the specific objective of preventing the use of nuclear weapons or other actions which could lead to a nuclear exchange.'(156)

These reflections, offered in the light of the papal position, lead to a 'strictly conditioned moral acceptance of nuclear deterrence' which yet remains inadequate as a long-term basis for peace. This acceptance of the morality of deterrence is seen then as yielding criteria to assess the different elements of nuclear strategy, and to make a contribution to the public scrutiny of government action.

CRITIQUE:

The bishops employ two central criteria of the just war tradition in their study of the concrete elements of nuclear deterrence strategy in so far as it can be understood from those facts in the public domain, and find such a strategy deficient.

The criteria of noncombatant immunity and proportionality lead them only to a strictly conditioned acceptance of the deterrent's moral acceptability. What determines that view is however in the end less the just war categories than an avowed agnosticism about the nature of nuclear conflict itself. Ultimately it is a matter of political and strategic judgment which the bishops make here. They set out a view of nuclear war which stresses its unpredictability, its tendency towards escalation, and most trenchantly the impossibility of setting out realistic limits, both in the immediate context of a nuclear conflict and in its long-term effects on mankind and the environment. This leads them to devote considerable attention to the error of imagining that more accurately targeted weaponry, for example, will meet the moral demands they set. Their intention is not to set the scene for the considered and careful use of sophisticated and limited nuclear arsenals. On the contrary, by a mixture of strategic judgment and the use of traditional moral category they accord the nuclear deterrence as narrow a base as can be imagined, and seek in according the mere possession of it to elide any ambiguity as to the moral justification of its use. The 'centimeter' of ambiguity applies in reality to that narrow seam of tolerance marked on the one side by outright rejection of the deterrent in any shape and on the other by the nature of the 'strict conditions' they set. These are addressed in the section which follows.

'...Specific evaluations',
Paragraphs #188-199

The evaluations which follow spell out the bishops' judgement on some elements of the strategic thinking of the American regime. They tie deterrence explicitly to the idea of 'sufficiency'. Thus, they rule out planning for nuclear superiority as necessary for deterrence. They suggest that against this judgment must be tested all changes in strategic doctrine. They explicitly rule out proposals which address the notion of 'prevailing' in nuclear war, with talk of prolonged nuclear

strikes. Along with sufficiency to deter goes the goal of 'progressive disarmament'. If deterrence is acceptable in the papal view only in this context then any change in nuclear doctrine must face the test of whether it promotes or diminishes the opportunity for such disarmament.

They then turn to the search for disarmament, the precondition of authentic peace. In short, the chief 'strict' condition would appear to be that the acceptance of the deterrent is limited to the present, and that proposals to alter it are open to rejection if they are destabilizing or tend to move beyond the strictly sufficient. Prominent among such proposals are first-strike weapons, which a footnote discloses as the MX and Pershing II missile systems along with their Soviet counterparts.(157) Similarly criticized are those weapons which blur the distinction between conventional and nuclear war.

Out of these 'evaluations' which are in effect criticisms of current Administration thinking, the Pastoral goes on to recommend six courses of action. They lend support to 'immediate, bilateral, verifiable agreements to halt the testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons systems.'(158)

In this the bishops are in effect lending their weight to the core concern of the 'nuclear freeze' initiative, while taking pains not to endorse it explicitly. This is spelled out in the footnote, although the bishops remain coy about naming it. They stress that their determination to support the ending of the arms race and the beginning of disarmament has been a constant theme of the various drafts, by implication suggesting that it has not been borrowed from the mass movement. Thus,

'...we have chosen our own language in this paragraph, not wanting either to be identified with one specific political initiative or to have our words used against specific political measures.'(159)

The bishops also offer support for the established arms control negotiations at both strategic and intermediate level, and the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

Finally, they seek safeguards against the breaching of the nuclear threshold, urging the removal of nuclear weapons from areas which could be overrun early in an armed conflict, and the strengthening of command controls to prevent inadvertent or unauthorized use.

As if to respond to the question which must form in the minds of readers of the Pastoral, the bishops move to a reassertion of their basic teaching on the legitimacy of the deterrent.(160) Thus, they both stress the limits on its role and establish the distance between their qualified acceptance and the position of those who argue the simple condemnation of nuclear deterrence per se. The stress in this final part of the section is, nevertheless, on the severe and heavily qualified legitimacy they are prepared to advance nuclear deterrence. The language of this section suggests that the bishops are defining their position over against those who accord deterrence a natural role in strategic planning, with talk of limited and even winnable war. The distance between the view the bishops put forward and that of the nuclear pacifist is not so clearly argued. In seeking to build a barrier against any resort to nuclear weapons they offer a wide range of factors which move beyond the detail of weapon systems or declaratory policy:

'The psychological climate of the world is such that mention of the term 'nuclear' generates uneasiness. Many contend that the use of one tactical nuclear weapon could produce panic, with completely unpredictable consequences. It is precisely this mix of political, psychological and technological uncertainty which has moved us in this letter to reinforce with moral prohibitions and prescriptions the prevailing political barrier against resort to nuclear weapons. Our support for enhanced command and control facilities, for major reductions in strategic and tactical nuclear forces, and for a 'no first use' policy...is meant to be seen as a complement to our desire to draw a moral line against nuclear war.'(161)

In their concluding paragraphs the bishops set out once again to demonstrate their eagerness 'on moral grounds' to contribute to the ongoing public debate. The degree of reluctance with which they offer even what they take to be a highly qualified acceptance of deterrence is again evidenced by reference to

those within the Catholic community, and indeed within the hierarchy itself, who challenge the strategy of deterrence, who remain sceptical of its providing the motive for a substantial disarmament process. Moreover they acknowledge the power of those who fear that the qualified acceptance they offer may be used in support of an arms buildup. They also accept that theirs has not been a prophetic voice, such as might call on the whole community of faith to a more resolute search for peace making. There is even a rather wistful note in their acceptance of the intellectual force as well as religious sensibility which lie behind such a call. Theirs however is a more difficult and subtle approach, namely to seek to bring the pastoral passion of the church, its intellectual framework of analysis of war and peace, and as rigorous an investigation of the facts of the strategy of the nation as possible to bear on the thinking of the whole political community. Is the product worthy of the aim?

CRITIQUE:

The Pastoral's Treatment of Deterrence: 'Realistic but Radical'?

The section of the Pastoral which deals with the strategy of deterrence as it is understood by the U.S. administration is one of the central elements in the bishops' thinking on war and peace. Its significance lies in its willingness, even readiness, to encounter the sharp end of the public policy debate, and to risk the making of concrete judgments on current Administration policy. Fired by what Hehir describes as the determination to build a barrier against the use of nuclear weapons they have, as we have seen, stopped short of condemning all use of nuclear weaponry, but so surround the possession of the deterrent arsenal with qualifying judgments that the margin of acceptance is very small. The bishops well understood that in moving from the time-honoured tradition of proffering general moral principles to the contingent realities of prudential judgment, the efficacy of the teaching they offered here would depend on the inner coherence of the argument. To win the right to contribute to the public debate at their desired level

of seriousness would involve submitting the Pastoral to searching analysis, and although they might argue for the Pastoral to be seen as a cogent whole, the section on such a matter of public debate would inevitably be read as if it stood alone.

CRITIQUE

The Bishops on deterrence: an evaluation.

'The Catholic conscience is a puzzle. For, to the chagrin of more prophetic churchmen, the bishops balanced their decisive 'no' to nuclear war with a qualified 'yes' to the strategy of deterrence. Persuaded that using nuclear weapons would violate the canons of the civilized tradition of warfare, they nevertheless accepted the arguments presented to them in favour of enhancing conventional forces and even for retaining over an indefinite period the nuclear arsenal itself. With this paradoxical stance, they endorse a deterrence and defense posture that is radical without being precipitous.'(162)

Francis Winters, a consultant to the Bernardin Committee, who enlivens the debate surrounding the Pastoral with his witty and urbane comment, introduces here the central difficulty of evaluating the bishops' treatment of deterrence. Indeed the difficulty is greater than he suggests. We are faced in our reaction to the treatment not so much with the simple puzzle of the Catholic conscience as with an overlapping series of puzzles. This part of the Pastoral which yields so much to those interested in the process, revealing the sometimes tortuous course which led to its conclusion, proves to be so studded with negotiated compromise that it comes under fire from a wide array of critics. This is arguably the abiding value of the text and the recorded process which produced it. Neither in its structuring of the argument nor in its conclusions is it the final word. We sense here the play of argument and conviction, the mood of the debate not only within the committee but in the wider ecclesial and political community. The history of The Challenge of Peace can be seen as conducted in an arena in which the protagonists of widely differing views of the world, of the nature of the church's task and of the realities of politics jostle. For commentators like Winters it is a vindication of the Catholic way, a subtle and provisional act of listening and teaching. It is a puzzle but one arrived at with truthfulness. For others it is a mess of unresolved questions, indeed a failure of nerve. The Pastoral may reveal here a hierarchy more confident in a mirroring than in a guiding role. Indeed, to expect definitive guidance in a minefield of strategic and moral

dispute may be to ask more of the bishops than can be delivered. The Pastoral's thesis on deterrence is most significant if we see it taking its place within a development of the hierarchy's engagement with the question over two decades. To speak of it simply as an isolated text, remote from other products of the Church's thinking and teaching and from its particular context, robs it of its distinct character. George Weigel writing about the papal encyclical Sollicitudo Rei Socialis affirms the need for a text to stand in its own right, in short to say what it means.(163) That is undoubtedly so in relation to a document whose propagation and authorship, although discoverable, are not intrinsic to its content. It need not be so with such a document as The Challenge of Peace. It might even be argued that the final draft as accepted at Chicago in May 1983 was more in the nature of a snapshot than a final proof. It was a moment of heightened public perception of the thinking of the hierarchy which issues in an evolving body of thought which would continue to be fashioned and coloured by the reception of the document.

The Pastoral's place in American Catholic thought on deterrence

It is both convenient and necessary to begin with the judgement on deterrence voiced by the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council in the Pastoral Constitution.(164) The initial enagement of the Council with problems of peace and international community was coloured early in the process by the international anxieties aroused by the Cuban crisis, and the impact of the encyclical Pacem In Terris in April 1963.

In paragraph #81 of the Pastoral Constitution the Council Fathers addressed the problem of the nuclear deterrent:

'Undoubtedly, armaments are not amassed merely for use in wartime. Since the defensive strength of any nation is thought to depend on its capacity for immediate retaliation, the stockpiling of arms which grows from year to year serves, in a way hitherto unthought of, as a deterrent to potential attackers. Many people look upon this as the most effective way known at the present time for maintaining some sort of peace among nations.

Whatever one may think of this form of deterrent, people are convinced that the arms race, which quite a few countries have entered, is no infallible way of maintaining real peace and that the resulting so-called balance of power is no sure and genuine path to achieving it. Rather than eliminate the causes of war, the arms race serves only to aggravate the position... New approaches, based on reformed attitudes, will have to be chosen in order to remove this stumbling block, to free the earth from its pressing anxieties, and give back to the world a genuine peace.

Rene Coste praises this article as 'firm and discriminating', employing a tone 'appropriate to the gravity of the drama', and 'perhaps the best part of the whole section'.(165) The American bishops present would not have agreed. Among them was Bishop Philip Hannan, then an auxiliary bishop of Washington DC. Some twenty years later, during the debates surrounding The Challenge of Peace, Hannan might well have felt that he was fighting over old ground.(166) It was Hannan, during the closing days of the final session, who sought to change the schema's treatment of warfare. He persuaded nine other bishops, among them Cardinals Spellman and Shehan, to urge a non placet vote on the entire chapter. Their opposition centred on the judgment in the text that the possession of nuclear arms is immoral. In a letter urging abandonment of the text, the bishops judged that the possession of nuclear arms had preserved freedom, and that this 'defense of a large part of the world against aggression is not a crime, but a great service...'(167) Moreover, they concluded that it was impossible for the Council to make a decision while there was no consensus of opinion among theologians.

Yzermans concludes:

'Most observers realized the futility of the gesture because of the timing, and the attempt...failed. [It] was effective only in confirming the opinion of those who felt that a certain segment of the hierarchy of the United States approved of its country's military position'. (168)

Other American bishops quickly distanced themselves from the action but it captured a tone within the American hierarchy, a voice louder in opposition to the conciliar treatment of deterrence than others were in praise. In fact the conciliar

view was clearer in its thinking on the nature of the question than it was in offering a way forward. It expressed the paradox of the problem, both moral and political, without a matching expression of the resolution. The question was not only whether the notion of 'immediate retaliation' and the accompanying stockpiling of arms was 'the most effective way' of maintaining peace, but, even if it was so regarded, how 'some sort of peace' among nations was to be transformed into the kind of order which the Pastoral Constitution envisaged. The Pastoral Constitution, in short, was more to be welcomed for its analysis of the challenge than for its guidance on action for peace.

The Pastoral Constitution having expressed the mind of the Church, indications of American episcopal thinking came in 1968 and 1976.

In 1968 the bishops produced two pastoral letters in the light of the Second Vatican Council. Human Life in Our Day (169) included a discussion of the nuclear issue primarily in terms of arms control. Recalling the judgements on deterrence in the Pastoral Constitution, the bishops highlighted the need to build a pattern of reciprocal or collective disarmament. The bishops expressed themselves as encouraged by the Partial Test Ban Treaty and Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, both steps towards disarmament. Less welcome, they argued, was the U.S. decision to build an antiballistic missile shield, partly on the grounds that it might encourage the possibility of waging nuclear war, partly on the basis that it threatened to destabilize the existing balance, 'that [it] will incite other nations to increase their offensive nuclear forces with the seeming excuse of a need to restore the balance'. Thus, the bishops main concern was with the geopolitical reality of the balance of terror, and the destructive force of the arms race.(170)

To this concern with the arms race the bishops in their 1976 statement To Live In Christ Jesus addressed the wider aspects of nuclear weapons:

'With respect to nuclear weapons, at least those with massive destructive capability, the first imperative is to prevent their use. As possessors of a vast nuclear arsenal, we must also be aware that not only is it wrong to attack civilian populations, but it is also wrong to threaten to attack them as part of a strategy of deterrence'.(171)

Here the bishops were rehearsing the Pastoral Constitution's position on use of nuclear weapons against civilian populations. To this is added a judgement on intention. Behind the short statement lies the question whether it is permissible to threaten what is immoral to do. The bishops judge that it is not. Their short reflection is at the core of the moral dilemma posed by the deterrent, the existence of which leads to the need to have in mind the relationship between possession and threatened use. Episcopal thinking on this matter was revealed much more clearly in 1979, not in a Pastoral Letter but in the bishops' submission to a Senate hearing.

Cardinal Krol appeared in September 1979 before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to testify on behalf of the American hierarchy in support of the Senate ratification of SALT II.(172) In the course of that testimony Krol made a statement of the thinking of a majority of the American bishops on the most important moral challenge, one which formed the context for the SALT process, namely nuclear deterrence. The submission raised little public interest, not least as the SALT process foundered after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Yet that statement contained surprising information about the state of mind of many of the bishops in relation to the defence posture of the West.(173)

Krol's submission may have had little public impact, either on SALT, or on the public perception of Catholic thinking. But it does allow us to see the teaching offered in The Challenge of Peace in context.

Krol, in setting out the hierarchy's view, established themes which were to become very familiar in the debate surrounding the preparation of the 1983 Pastoral. First, he acknowledged the

diversity of the Catholic constituency. There existed a diversity of view not only within the Catholic community but within the American hierarchy itself. Krol spoke of the moral principles which underlay the Catholic position, but, in a manner to become familiar in the text of The Challenge of Peace, made clear that the way in which such principles were reflected in relation to particular policy proposals such as the SALT II agreement allowed for diversity. Creating space for a legitimate diversity of view reflected the opposition to the agreement which had come from the Pax Christi caucus within the hierarchy, who feared it gave legitimacy to the arms race. The submission was sensitive to the question of whether a fragmented view robbed the hierarchy's position of its power. Krol defended the view advanced by the majority of the bishops from being ignored simply because it was not a unanimous view:

'It is...the official policy of the U.S.C.C., and in expressing it, we bishops seek to fulfill a role of responsible citizenship as well as religious leadership.(174)

These motifs of the place of legitimate diversity within the Church, the relationship between principles and their application to particular policy proposals, the bishops' role as citizens, all point forward to issues which emerged more publicly in the 1983 Pastoral.

The submission was in response to an arms control measure, and in tendering episcopal support for it, Krol offered a classic statement of thinking on the arms race:

'The Catholic bishops of this country believe that too long have we Americans been preoccupied with preparations for war: too long have we been guided by the false criterion of equivalence or superiority of armaments: too long have we allowed other nations to virtually dictate how much we should spend on stockpiling weapons of destruction. Is it not time that we concentrate our efforts on peace rather than war? Is it not time that we take that first step towards peace: gradual, bilateral, negotiated disarmament?'.(175)

The Cardinal went on to address the wider issues of nuclear strategy, identifying the newness of the nuclear dilemma in the

context of the tradition of Catholic reflection on war. That tradition had consistently sought to limit the impact of war on the human family. In the framework of that strong overall presumption against violence central to the Christian tradition, the moral sanctions against war have taken on a new character in the nuclear age. This reflects the newness of nuclear war, which surpasses the boundaries of legitimate self-defense. Krol in his statement repeated the unambiguous condemnation in Gaudium et Spes of any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of cities or extensive areas, and invoking the authority of the Council went on:

'This was the only formal condemnation of the council and indicates the seriousness with which the bishops of the world viewed the possible use of what they called "modern strategic weapons". Our first purpose in supporting SALT II is to illustrate our support for any reasonable effort which is designed to make nuclear war in any form less likely. I have said that our support of the treaty is qualified; one reason for this is the paradox of nuclear deterrence.' (176)

Krol offered no detailed account of the process which led to this recognition, but it seems clear that it is allied to extreme scepticism about the effects of escalation and the possibility of control. Thus far Krol moved within the familiar world of mainstream Catholic reflection. The real innovation in the bishops' address to the question of deterrence came in the distinction the Cardinal drew between the threatened use of nuclear weapons and their mere possession, justifying the latter as the lesser of two evils, provided that negotiations are conducted towards the reduction and elimination of nuclear war. He drew attention to the treatment of the intention to use strategic nuclear deterrent in the 1976 Pastoral Reflection, concluding:

'This moral judgement that the use of strategic nuclear weapons and the declared intent to use them in our deterrence policy are both wrong is a fundamental principle in the USCC position.' (177)

No space was given to demonstrate the moral reasoning which underpinned this position. What it describes is the bishops' move beyond the condemnation of use or threatened use against population centres to the condemnation of any use whatsoever of

such strategic systems against any target, even in retaliation. The new element is the distinction he drew between threat or use and 'mere' continued possession. While condemning even threatened use of such weapons Krol stopped short of calling for their abandonment. Krol's statement had one main conclusion in respect of deterrence: threat of use involves intention, but mere possession is compatible with the intention not to use. The use of nuclear weapons is immoral. To threaten the use of such weapons indicates an intention to do so. It is possible, however, to possess such weapons with the intention not to use them.

Such willingness to accord legitimacy to 'mere' possession is not a static one, however. It is to be seen in the context of negotiation towards continuing reductions in nuclear stockpiles and the eventual phasing out of nuclear deterrence:

'As long as there is hope of this occurring, Catholic moral teaching is willing, while negotiations proceed, to tolerate the possession of nuclear weapons for deterrence as the lesser of two evils. If that hope were to disappear, the moral attitude of the Catholic church would almost certainly have to shift to one of uncompromising condemnation of both use and possession of such weapons.'(178)

That condemnation would be predicated on the loss by the U.S. policy of a sustainable moral base. Thus in the summary which Krol offered at the end of his submission:

'Failure by the US to take full advantage of the possibilities for further restraints and reductions will eventually rob US foreign and defense policy of moral legitimacy.'(179)

Deterrence, therefore, and the international system it underpinned, were served notice that there was a provisionality about Catholic tolerance of its moral legitimacy. Krol's statement is important in the development of the American bishops' thinking, even if its impact on the political community was negligible.

In assessing it, Hollenbach refers to its 'involutional quality' which gives ground for thinking that something had gone awry in

its approach to the morality of deterrence.(180) Certainly, it left many important consequences unresolved. What would distinguish intention to use from intention not to use? We must assume that policies which make war less likely constitute the intention to avoid war. Thus, making war less likely must be the criterion which is employed in the concrete evaluation of policy. Hollenbach makes an important observation here. He argues that there is no such thing as 'deterrence in the abstract'. Rather there are only specific defence postures as they take shape in weapons systems, targeting doctrines, procurement programs and strategic master concepts. The task of ethical scrutiny is precisely these specifics, not an abstract notion of deterrence or intention. Here, we may assume, he finds the approach of The Challenge of Peace more congenial.

Winters, we may feel, argues a little too strongly when he accords the Krol submission the character of a revolution, albeit a quiet one, except in one regard. In its character and attitude towards public debate on questions of nuclear strategy it demonstrates a willingness to challenge policy, not on a matter of domestic ecclesiastical concern but on a major public question. The submission itself, and the attendant scholarly debate, do show graphically the great diversity of opinion and indeed energy in this discussion. What it does not allow us to see is the unfolding of a new Catholic American tradition which flowered in the issuing of The Challenge of Peace. There is no linear development discernible here, a steady progression from Council to Pastoral. What is on display is something much more tentative and yet much more exciting, the sight of a major Christian community grappling with a major public question.(181) In an area of public debate where there is little theological unanimity to inject clarity into the discussion, where the Catholic community in general holds different views the bishops expose themselves to attack on a number of fronts. Are they too accommodating of the Administration line, too naive, too incompetent, too realist, too idealist? Such criticism often seems to miss the mark, for what we see displayed in the Krol submission and much more graphically and extensively in the 1983

Pastoral is the willingness to offer a contribution, transitional and specific to its context, to help shape a still developing opinion within the Church and within wider society.

A DEFECTIVE VIEW OF GEOPOLITICAL REALITY?

In this view the argument is put forward that the bishops' reflection on nuclear deterrence is fatally flawed because it fails to give proper attention to the world within which deterrence policy developed. It is invidious, the proponents of this view argue, to begin an extended discussion of defence and the deterrent while paying scant attention to the root cause of the current military situation. The bishops are too ready, it is argued, to attack nuclear deterrence policy as if it were 'something between a deadly disease and a pernicious habit', (182) while remaining strangely reluctant to look at the international threats which might justify the maintenance of existing deterrence and defense capabilities. If the threat to liberty and Western values is not accorded a high priority, then it is difficult to see why the bishops are willing to countenance the retention of any deterrent. If there is such a threat, and it must be assumed that there is, at least until the balance of terror and the arms race can be dissolved, why are the bishops so shy about offering the rationale? Failure to identify clearly and unequivocally the reality of the Soviet threat and intention to achieve world hegemony; failure to affirm clearly and unequivocally the beauty of the American way of life and the moral superiority of liberal democratic institutions; failure to enter the world of those Western nations within the Atlantic Alliance close to the realities of that threat. These are the main elements in this part of the argument.

In short the criticism is that the bishops are unwilling to examine the reality behind superpower conflict, the ideological struggle between communism and western liberal democratic

societies, and this reluctance robs the treatment of deterrence of its context and necessity.

Is it fair to accuse the Pastoral of an insufficient treatment of international politics? It is the case that the most developed reflection on international politics comes not in this section but in #245ff, 'The Superpowers in a Disordered World'. There judgment on relations between the Soviet Union and the United States are considered in the context of an international order which lacks order, an approach which elicits from some commentators accusations of an 'even-handed' approach or a 'clinical disinterestedness.' (183) O'Brien goes so far as to see in this part of the abandonment of the American Catholic tradition. (184) This is not an expression of praise for the bishops' objectivity but an attack on what is seen as a slide into an attitude of moral equivalence.

This is an unjust attack. The bishops deliberately recall their earlier statement on Marxism, and spend time drawing attention to the recent examples of Soviet action in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan. They also cite the Soviet record on human rights. Certainly they draw attention to the failure of the United States to live up to its ideals. They refuse to be drawn into facile affirmations of the moral superiority of the American way, and when such affirmation does emerge, as in #252, (185) it sits uncomfortably with the rest of the text. But this discomfort is not to be seen as the product of a lukewarm attitude towards their own culture. Rather it is to be understood in the context of a well-established Catholic tradition of reflection upon the urgent need for an international order which is based on a shared vision of order greater than military superiority. Certainly, Americans hoping to find here the slogans of Cardinal Spellman would be disappointed. We might recall, however, that the bishops' geopolitical reflections are to be seen against the backdrop of an administration which had a highly developed rhetoric of its own.

If the bishops refused to be harnessed as apologists for administration policy, and much of the criticism directed at them seems wilfully to ignore the context in which they do set their thoughts on the international scene, they are more vulnerable in their scant regard to the impact of American actions on Western Europe. This formed part of the backdrop to the Rome Consultation in January 1983, with the nervousness of the German and French hierarchies in particular attributable not only to differing moral and theological approaches to nuclear war, but also to the rather different political realities facing those nations closer to the nations of the Warsaw Pact.(186)

Similarly, the bishops are vulnerable to the accusation that they are not sufficiently aware of the danger posed to those countries situated at what O'Brien calls the 'periphery of the free world deterrence and defense systems'(187) Not only does this play no observable part in the text, but it seems implicit in a 'worst case' presentation of the bishops' consideration of the use of nuclear weapons.

The criticism does not end here, however. Not only is the Pastoral judged to be weak in its analysis of the realities of international politics, but a further element of the criticism is a theological one, namely that the Pastoral fails to develop sufficiently the category of 'just cause'.

Even if the contemporary political realities were weakly described, it is argued that the bishops could have developed a treatment of 'just cause' which would have allowed their audience to draw its own conclusions. O'Brien accuses them of failure to employ the whole wisdom of the just war tradition, of failure to employ the 'calculus of proportionality of ends and means', preferring an instant judgement that no ends can justify such means. He defends the just war approach of seeking to relate ends and means in a robust and honest manner.

'A just war approach would balance the risks of nuclear destruction with the risks of loss of freedom and fundamental rights that relinquishment of nuclear deterrence and defense would probably engender...The bishops approach the issues of nuclear war with a 'morality first' approach. That is to say,

they put nuclear deterrence and defense through a moral analysis without reference to the necessity of these means to the defense of freedom and human rights, and come to the conclusion that nuclear deterrence and defense do not pass the test of moral permissibility. Therefore, these means must, at most, be only temporarily condoned as a necessary evil and speedily eliminated. But this 'morality first' approach is a stunted, incomplete, morality of means only approach. There is scarcely any recognition of the morality of ends and of the consequences to those ends that would be critically affected by a rigid application of the conclusion produced in the morality of means analysis.'(188)

O'Brien does not regard the American Pastoral as the only exemplar of this failure. Is he justified?

There is, it seems to me, a well-developed sense in the Pastoral of what 'end' the bishops hope their teaching will further. The real difficulty for those who find their approach inimical is that the end to which it tends lacks conviction. In particular, the bishops do not identify the Kingdom with contemporary American institutions, nor are they prepared to act as apologists for the American way of life. This means that conservative commentators search in vain for clear and unequivocal statements of opposition to Communism as an ideology, or for lengthy treatment of the nature of the Communist threat to the 'free world'. There are statements within this section which mark out the bishops as opposed to the international policy pursued by the Soviet regime. But it is not the threat of communist domination which animates the Pastoral and gives the task of the bishops urgency. That was already loudly articulated in America, and the bishops had already addressed it. The urgency of the task, the 'new moment' is, rather, that sense of the unprecedented danger which comes from the new nuclear technology and its accompanying rhetoric of the winnable nuclear war. It is that end which the bishops seek to avert, by building a public consensus that militates against it, by seeking to strengthen the boundary between conventional and nuclear war while steps are taken to dismantle the nuclear threat. The end which the bishops seek to promote is not coterminous with the philosophy of the western free market economy, nor indeed is it one which is attentive only to the perceived needs of the 'free' world. The end they seek is

that encapsulated in the scriptural section with which they begin. They may be at fault in the shaping of their Pastoral, in that this is not made more explicit at this point. What seems certain is that it is the scriptural image of man and of his destiny, in short the establishment of peace, which is reflected here in concern for human rights wherever they are flouted. It is not 'evenhandedness' of approach in the sense that there is here a lukewarm validation of the human values of freedom and security. Rather the Letter is animated by a breadth of concern and by a proper detachment from the excesses of current Administration policy, arrived at out of a sense of the possibilities for man. Accused of 'mere survivalism' in their treatment of the destiny of man, their defence is surely that they refuse to treat the mere survival of the free world, if not informed by moral character, as a sufficient end in itself.

A RETREAT INTO IDEALISM AND AN ABANDONMENT OF REALISM?

William O'Brien best articulates this criticism. He does pay tribute to the importance of the task which the bishops set themselves in addressing the question of deterrence. Indeed, he applauds the church's interest in questions of international economic and social justice. However, he questions whether the bishops remain true to their task:

'The American Catholic Bishops' 1983 Pastoral Letter accords the problems of deterrence and war an extremely lengthy analysis, reflecting an extraordinary drafting effort, but it abandons the enterprise at the critical point. The Bishops leave the faithful and the interested public, as well as themselves, with serious unfinished business.' (189)

Although he is punctilious in his affirmation of the validity of the idealist approach, he is damning in his judgement of the result on two main grounds.

First, the idealist position marks an abandonment of the realist element in Catholic tradition, represented at its most subtle in

the just war doctrine. O'Brien claims that the bishops, although invoking the just war criteria, do so in such a way that the interpretative power of its analysis is lost. Further, the Pastoral remains confusing in its argument surrounding the permissibility of nuclear weapons. He hints that such confusion is either the result of incomplete analysis or even deliberate ambiguity.

Secondly, the idealist position which the bishops adopt, although it has a long history within the church's reflection on war and peace, fails to deliver to those charged with political responsibility precisely that guidance which the bishops set out to provide. This is seen particularly in the way in which the Pastoral moves away from the true heart of the question, that surrounding deterrence, and concentrates on the more traditional Catholic idealist territory of regretting the absence of an international community and strictures on the arms trade. If the bishops were to remain true to their intention to address a multiplicity of audiences, including the policy-makers, that would have demanded the use of an appropriate language of discourse. While some commentators see in this the climax of the abandonment of the realist tradition, a progressive abandonment within the American church from the time of the Council and Vietnam, others see in the Pastoral the promise of a realist approach which is not fulfilled.

Although very different in form and weight from the Pastoral Letter, an alternative way of pursuing the 'realist' approach is to be found in an essay by John Courtney Murray.(190) Murray's wide-ranging thought on the nature of Catholicism and its relation to American culture continues to have an almost talismanic power for commentators sympathetic to the realist approach.

Even in the context in which Murray was writing, the height of the Cold War, he expressed a sense of loss, and regretted the church's failure to use the insights of Catholic realism during the course of the Second World war. Such a failure to employ the

tradition does not invalidate it, but rather acts as a judgment on the the church.(191) Murray draws a picture of the contribution Christian realism can make as a clarifying agent in the debate on peace and war:

'The initial relevance of the traditional doctrine today lies in its value as the solvent of false dilemmas. Our fragmented culture seems to be the native soil of this fallacious and dangerous type of thinking. There are...two extreme positions, a soft sentimental pacifism and a cynical hard realism. Both of these views...are formative factors in the moral climate of the moment. Both of them are condemned by the traditional doctrine as false and pernicious. The problem is to refute by argument the false antinomy between war and morality...the further and more difficult problem is to purify the public climate of the miasma that emanates from each of them and tends to smother the public conscience.'(192)

It would be too much to suggest that Murray would have found the Pastoral a miasmatic document, but we may suspect that he would have been contemptuous of its clarifying character and perhaps also of its sentimentality. Tempting though such speculation is, what does emerge from Murray's essay is a much more robust idea of what is the task of the church when it employs its tradition. Given that the disappearance of war is not an immediate likelihood, the church's task in this area is clear. Since nuclear war may be a necessity it must be made a possibility, a possibility conditioned by the moral imperative of restraint. Murray writes:

'Policy is the meeting-place of the world of power and the world of morality, in which there takes place the concrete reconciliation of the duty of success that rests upon the statesman and the duty of justice that rests upon the civilized nation that he serves.'(193)

Murray's vision of the task is very different to that defined, say, by Hehir. It is not so much the building of barriers against nuclear war, the search to clear a firebreak between conventional arms and nuclear weaponry, while being deeply suspicious of talk of limited war, and just as deeply pessimistic about the possibility of realistic control. Rather, the task is to envisage the conduct of such a conflict, then to set the limits for its conduct, all underpinned by a clear-headed understanding of why it is that war might become necessary.(194)

The global situation in which Murray wrote was very different from that addressed by the bishops. Yet the difference hinted at in this essay is not to be explained on the basis of different context. There is here a very different perception of the task of the church. It connects with those scornful of the church's 'morality first' approach, while not in any sense being naive about the cost of war. Thus Murray concludes that:

'...the whole Catholic doctrine of war is hardly more than a Grenzmoral, an effort to establish on a minimal basis of reason a form of human action, the making of war, that remains always fundamentally irrational.'(195)

It implies a view of the church as an almost sovereign agent, employing a tradition which, while available to all, is its particular preserve. It predicates a church very unlike that which addresses the American public in 1983. We see in The Challenge of Peace a church which self-consciously seeks to articulate a public mood, and does so in a world in which the boundary of which Murray spoke is in such danger of erosion that any talk of the necessity of war would seem dangerous.

That such an approach remains theoretically possible is demonstrated by the 'alternative pastoral' prepared by Michael Novak.(196)

BETWEEN THE POLES? - THE PASTORAL'S TREATMENT OF DETERRENCE IN RETROSPECT

What the bishops had to say about deterrence was part of a public debate of extraordinary vitality. Bernardin described the nuclear debate as it was carried on until the 1980's as an elite discussion, engaging a very sophisticated but tightly-knit corps of specialists.(197) It acquired, he suggested, a character associated historically with the classic doctrinal shifts within Christianity, in which there were fierce partisan claims of orthodoxy and heresy, and each change in strategy was heralded as a change in doctrine. It was the nuclear freeze movement which symbolized a change, as the mass of the electorate became engaged in the debate, a debate which had always affected but hardly ever

included them. The motif of public engagement was accompanied by a new attentiveness to the moral and ethical dimension, in particular, Bernardin suggested, the central ethical question of when force could be used, under what conditions and by what means. In short the ethics of war were replaced by the ethics of nuclear peace.

'In the pre-nuclear age, right up through World War II, the moral arguments began with the war. Under conditions of nuclear deterrence, the key moral questions about targeting, declaratory doctrine, and the relationship of strategic policy and arms control were all discussed under conditions of peace.' (198)

Within this public debate, acting both as promoter of the need to be attentive to the ethical dimension and as reflector of that wider public engagement, Bernardin saw the bishops as promoting a view of deterrence between two poles. He described them not simply as the injectors of ethics into the debate, for many commentators drew on ethics in their argument. Rather, the bishops demonstrated a different way of doing ethics, a way which lay between two poles, two approaches which were highly distinctive in their conclusions but which shared a common way of ethical assessment. At one pole lay the view that the moral limits of ends and means could be maintained with nuclear weapons, and that a deterrent which was both credible and morally justifiable could be sustained.(199) At the other pole lay the view that there was an inevitable contradiction between what the maintenance of a credible deterrent required and the central moral principle that there could never be a justified intention to kill the innocent. The two views lay at different extremes in terms of conclusion, but they shared, in Bernardin's view, a common approach:

'Both of these polar positions offered internally coherent and very detailed policy judgments. Both positions conveyed a sense of confidence that the move from ethical assessment to policy conclusions was both possible and self-evidently imperative.'(200)

What then, seven years after the issuing of the Pastoral, and in a changed international political climate, did Bernardin see as the distinctiveness of the hierarchy's approach, and is there a

hint in the passage quoted of a withdrawing from the specificity of the bishops' address which had been such a mark of its approach?

The erstwhile chairman of the ad hoc committee suggested that characteristic of their approach had been a more broadly based way of tackling nuclear deterrence. Specifically, they refused to be confined within a technological view of deterrence which saw new levels of accuracy or miniaturization in weapons systems as the answer to the dilemma. They refused also to reduce the deterrence question to the simple question of moral intention, although they were unyielding in their support for the principle of protecting civilians. Freed from what we might call 'technology first' and 'morality first' approaches the bishops had intended to create space in the international situation marked by deterrence strategies. By placing restrictions on deterrence, girding their acceptance of it with restrictions on targeting, deployment and declaratory doctrine, they sought to help create a climate in which there could then be a transformation of the political and strategic context in which deterrence was set. Thus, the bishops' acceptance of deterrence was 'conditional', designed for an 'interim' period. Their intention was to 'forestall' the use of nuclear weapons, and 'relativize' deterrence in the long term. Bernardin acknowledged that the bishops' approach lacked easy categorization:

'...[it] was less clear and coherent than either of the poles of the ethical argument. It was a political ethic as much as a strategic one; it conditioned ethical acceptance of deterrence by seeking to reshape the political setting in which deterrence functioned.'(201)

That the mainspring for such a reshaping has proved to be the result of changes within the Soviet Union, and therefore not in a context to which the bishops could contribute directly, could not have been foreseen. With it a new ethical challenge is posed to the United States.

Bernardin then returns to what was castigated as an idealist approach, and properly suggests that the real task is the same as

before, the creation of an international community marked by 'a viable order of political relations which can control, contain and direct strategic relations'.(202)

Strategic reality may have changed, more rapidly and unpredictably than imagined, but the task the bishops set out in 1983 remains. An ethic of control must be transformed into an ethic of political order.

Although he does not develop the theme, Bernardin could see in the changed international situation of 1990 a vindication of the approach the bishops had struggled to enunciate in 1983. They had sought to locate all discussion of deterrence in the wider context of the political, had been reluctant to embrace the 'morality first' approach of which they were accused, or to immerse the ethics of use in the quicksand of optimism about control and limit proposed by technological advance. They had sought to create a firebreak, a withdrawal from talk of winnable nuclear war and from the language of confrontation. In the firebreak the conditioned acceptance of deterrence could do its work, namely give space for the energetic pursuit of transformed relations between the superpowers and the European nations. They had seen that as the most important task, and he judged that the task remained to be done. The urgency to determine the contours of the new order had lain behind the bishops' endeavour, and that task also remained. Just as in 1815 and 1945, he suggested, the task of creating a viable world order presented itself, but now the task was one in which 'all the actors in the global community' could share.

The speech at South Carolina ended in pure idealist vein, an approach which would be harder to sustain after the Gulf War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. But the vindication of the bishops' approach remains. Plundering Bernardin's speech which was rich in metaphor, the bishops had recognized that while they had steered between the poles, the task of 'building the earth' still lay ahead.

III THE PROMOTION OF PEACE
PROPOSALS AND POLICIES
Paragraphs #200-273

Introductory Critique

Building: a theology of Foundations?

Having established a biblically-based vision of peace, and having sought to create space for the enabling of a new world order in their treatment of the current strategic orthodoxy, the bishops turn their attention to the promotion of peace. How is the firebreak they have sought to clear to be used? How is the vision to be realised? Limits on war and its violence do not amount to peace.

If deterrence and its attendant strategic thought are to be compared to doctrinal disputes within the early church, now the promotion of peace is seen in architectural terms. Using an image from the papal speech at Coventry in 1982 peace, like a cathedral, is to be constructed patiently and faithfully.(203)

Deterrence had faced the bishops with the greatest intellectual and moral challenge. The painstaking, even painful, process of their reflection might be regarded as sharing something of a protracted building programme. By the end a building was in evidence, even if attitudes towards its shape, decoration and plan were varied.

In moving to the potentially less controversial area of peace-promotion the Pastoral's drafters ran the risk of erecting a building which either had nothing new to offer or which was easily ignored. In particular, did the Pastoral incorporate its hope that the vision of peace be linked with policy and personal choices?

'This positive conception of peacemaking profoundly influences many people in our time. At the beginning of this letter we affirmed the need for a more fully developed theology of peace. The basis of such a theology is found in the papal teaching of this century.... we wish to illustrate

how the positive vision of peace contained in Catholic teaching provides direction for policy and personal choices.'(204)

'Clearing the ground...'

A. Specific Steps to Reduce
the Danger of War
Paragraphs #202-233

The bishops set out a number of what I have called 'foundational elements' in this part of their attempt to build a cathedral of peace.

There is first their refusal to see peace simply as a state which is desirable for one nation, in this case the United States. Although not explicitly stated, this underpins the logic of the presentation in #202 of the call to U.S. foreign policy. The goals of mutual disarmament, the ratification of outstanding treaties and the development of non-violent alternatives are not designed to make the U.S. secure, but to contribute to a foreign policy which seeks to build an international security marked by a recognition of the truth that the world is inhabited by a single family. This 'fundamental principle' of Catholic teaching should lead to an affirmation of man's common destiny, and that interdependence should inform policy and negotiating posture. That sense of family is not best expressed in nuclear proliferation.(205) Thus, the interests of the U.S.A., narrowly defined, will not be a sufficient base for policy. That vision of world society which animates encyclicals like Populorum Progressio is to inform the bishops' teaching in their native culture.

The second foundational element is the promotion of all moves which will inhibit new nuclear weapons systems.(206) Moreover existing weapons should be reduced by verifiable agreement to help lessen the danger of war.(207) While ruling out unilateral disarmament, the bishops call for boldness in the taking of specific initiatives by the U.S.A., initiatives designed to draw

comparable response from the Soviet Union.(208) Thus arms reductions need not be inextricably linked to public negotiated agreements but can be the product of prudent independent initiatives.

Further elements in the building of peace include the need to see arms control only within the context of the political tension which motivates arms build-up (209); the recognition that attention to nuclear weapons does not exhaust the work to minimise the risk of war, for conventional warfare, a potential springboard for nuclear confrontation, needs to be the subject of arms control negotiations while vigilance is required to guard against the production and use of chemical and biological weapons (210); and the danger posed by the world of commerce as the sale of conventional arms by the major supplying countries reaches 'unprecedented levels'.(211) The bishops call on the U.S. government not only to work for multilateral controls, but to take independent initiatives, which

'would be particularly appropriate where the receiving government faces charges of gross and systematic human rights violations'.(212)

A sixth element concerns the cost of moving away from nuclear deterrence. Paying particular regard to the NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation the bishops concede that such a move could require willingness to incur higher costs in the development of conventional forces, in terms both of personnel and of weapons.(213) This might be a 'proportionate price to pay' in terms of the reduced possibility of nuclear war, but it is to be seen in context of the urgent unmet human needs pushed aside by resources applied to defense. Skirting the issue of the 'technical debate about policy and budgets' they stress that they wish in no sense to give encouragement to a notion of 'making the world safe for conventional war'. (214)

A final foundational element, and one which seems to have strayed from another building project, is a section on civil defence against nuclear attack.(215) The bishops express public

confusion as to whether this is part of a strategy of protection or part of the strategy of deterrence.

Thus far the bishops' concern has been, we have suggested, to clear the ground for the real task of this section. The Pastoral Letter then turns to the use of non-violent means to resolve conflict.(216) They preface their attention to this subject rather curiously, for they begin with a simple statement of a nation's right to self-defence. Such a right is uncontroverted in Catholic official social thought, but it reveals some of the struggles which lie behind this section. Paragraph #221 contains a dense set of statements which lend little clarity to the discussion which follows and, it must be assumed, reflect strongly-held concerns within the drafting body. These statements include the assertion that security is the right of all, but a right subject to divine law and the limits it sets: a statement on ethical theory that immoral means are not to be justified by the end sought; and finally the application of this to all forms of conflict, with particular attention being drawn to 'insurgency, counter-insurgency, destabilisation' and the like.

Taking as their starting-point the qualified praise given in Gaudium et Spes (217) to those who renounce the use of violence, the bishops reflect briefly on the possibility of peaceful non-compliance and non-cooperation as a planned strategy in the face of invasion. Curiously, they regard non-violent resistance as offering common ground to the pacifists and those operating within just war categories, for

'non-violent resistance makes clear that both are able to be committed to the same objective: defense of their country.'(218)

Non-violence is seen not only as a tactic of resistance but as pointing to 'a basic synthesis of beliefs and values' in which 'the goal is winning the other over, making the adversary a friend.'(219) The bishops end with support for a National Academy of Peace and Conflict Resolution, and the need for education for peace.

Finally in this section on specific steps to reduce the danger of war the bishops address 'the role of conscience'.(220) They speak of the relationship between the state and the individual in relation to military service and repeat the conclusion of the 1980 statement on Registration and Conscription.(221) Validity is accorded to Christians in armed forces, who provide a 'service to the common good and an exercise of the virtue of patriotism, so long as they fulfil this role within defined moral norms.'(222)

The bishops reiterate their support for conscientious objection in general and selective conscientious objection in a particular war. This latter, as they recall in their 1980 statement is 'a moral conclusion... validly derived from the classical teaching of just-war principles.'(223)

CRITIQUE

After the tone of the bishops' reflections on strategic policy and strategic doctrine the section which follows is something of an anticlimax. This is partly because of a difference in style, for the bishops employ that didactic and monitory tone which is so familiar from scores of other Catholic teaching documents. It is partly because here the bishops' attempt to form a community of conscience is being done from the margins, from the safe ground of moral discourse which church leaders could be expected to occupy. It stands in contrast to those areas where the bishops enter into the heart and heat of the debate over deterrence as they engage with policy-makers in their own territory. This section does contain points of interest, perhaps chiefly what one can discern of their struggle to affirm simultaneously both national self-defence and the legitimacy of non-violent solutions to conflict. But if the moral exhortations and 'foundational elements' crafted by the bishops were to win their readers' close attention, this section would have required much more careful integration into the one which preceded it and which ineluctably would attract most public interest.

'The Building takes Shape'

B Shaping a peaceful world

Paragraphs #234-273

Following Pope Paul VI the Pastoral sees peace as
 'something built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order
 intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice
 among men and women.'(224)

The relationship between peace and order, the relationship
 between peace and justice and other questions only touched upon
 in this paragraph lie at the heart of the Catholic tradition of
 thinking on social issues. Little of this is developed in the
 Pastoral itself. The text is content here to reflect on an
 understanding of peace which is intrinsically linked to the
 question of order. Even if the peace to be built is fully
 realisable only in the Kingdom, three tasks are identified here.
 First the bishops address the question of world order; secondly
 they tackle the experienced reality of world disorder as it is
 seen in the superpower relationship; and finally, they speak of
 the wider dependence of the global community.

B1.'World order in Catholic teaching.'

Paragraphs #235-244

A 'positive conception' of peace sees it as the fruit of order,
 an order in its turn shaped by values of justice, truth, freedom
 and love. Thus the bishops locate themselves in a tradition
 forged from scripture and the Fathers which finds expression in
 contemporary papal teaching. What marks the notion of world
 order? The bishops argue that its 'fundamental premise' is a
 theological one, the unity of the human family, rooted in a
 common creation and destined for the Kingdom. Within the world
 as it is experienced the bishops recognise the 'real but relative
 moral value'(225) accorded the nation-state in moral theology and
 cite Pacem in Terris as the locus of reflection on the mix of

rights and duties among states. Addressing the specific context of these relations has been a mark of papal thinking since the Council, they suggest, and they defend the Church against an implied 'realist' attack by seeing this teaching as 'sensitive to the actual patterns of relations prevailing among states. While not ignoring present geopolitical realities, one of the primary functions of Catholic teaching on world order has been to point the way toward a more integrated international system'(226)

The central feature of the path towards world order is that of interdependence, human, political and economic.(227)

An inhibiting factor in the present world order is the lack of that political authority which could help shape material into moral interdependence. In telegraphic form the bishops suggest that the present moment is one which requires an exponential leap towards the new political order, a transition from the modern nation-state to a global interdependence which will require global systems of governance. Yet, the question is not only one of political structures but of moral vision, one which can be forwarded by states interpreting their national interest in the light of the larger global interest.(228)

B2. 'Superpowers in a Disordered World'

Paragraphs #245-258

The second element in shaping a peaceful world is the experienced reality of one indicator of the fragile nature of order, superpower rivalry.

Some elements in the bishops' reflections have already been referred to. If the section which precedes it is vulnerable to criticism born of its 'idealist' approach, this section is singled out by critics as an example of moral indifferentism.

As a fullblooded critique of superpower conflict it is too brief to offer a measured treatment of the philosophical, ideological and competitive division the text alludes to.(229) It is uneven in tone. Passing references to American ideals and Soviet aggression are sandwiched within a wider discussion of detente, human rights, arms control and existing military alliances.

It would be difficult to deny that as a discussion of the major feature of international relations it is inadequate. The real test of the text's validity at this point, however, is revealed by its position in the overall plan of the Pastoral.

Admittedly, the structure of the Letter as a whole does not always facilitate an easy access to the argument. Here the bishops set the discussion after their consideration of the Catholic ideal of a world order marked by peace and justice, and before their treatment of international institutions which forward that vision.

The central conceit of this section is simple, although so overlaid by the detritus of the surrounding debate that it is not immediately apparent. The bishops present us with a summons: first, to move beyond that 'hardness of heart' which allows the present pattern of rivalry and conflict to be a petrified reality for all time, and which can only be assuaged by victory (230); and secondly, to see beyond the present shape of American policy, in its conduct of both foreign and military policy, to a world order which fulfills those aspirations which are only partially realised in the American experiment.(231)

B3. 'Interdependence'

From Fact to Policy

Paragraphs #259-273

The third element is that of global interdependence. Here the bishops introduce some reflections on the 'broader international context' in which the superpower relationship is played out. The 'pre-eminent' issue identified by the Pastoral is that of

development, or rather the 'chasm' in living standards between the industrialised north and the developing south.(232) Wisely, the bishops recognise that proper attention to development issues would require another teaching initiative, but it is introduced here for a specific purpose:

'...Catholic teaching has maintained an analysis of the problem which should be identified here. The analysis acknowledges internal causes of poverty, but also concentrates on the way larger international economic structures affect the poor nations. These particularly involve trade, monetary investment and aid policies.'(233)

Although they make passing reference to specific programmes the most telling part of this short section on world poverty issues concerns the attitude to American society it reflects. Offering a long quotation from a papal speech at Yankee Stadium in 1979 they identify a challenge at once intellectual, moral and political.(234) But the papal challenge, although focused on issues of world poverty, suggested a way of proceeding which would seem to support their own methodology on issues of peace and war. It called for an approach 'within the framework of your national institutions and in cooperation with all your compatriots.' It would not be inappropriate to construct a rationale for the method of the 'peace Pastoral' on this basis. Moreover, the attention the bishops were soon to give to economic issues can be seen as presaged here, not simply as another isolated initiative but as part of a developing tradition of reflection on the characteristics of present world disorder, and the promotion of a renewed international order.

Meanwhile the bishops go on to lend their support to 'multilateral institutions' which seek to promote such an order, and to the United Nations in particular.(235) While acknowledging the limitations of the U.N. the Pastoral seeks to strengthen U.S. involvement in its operation by 'assum[ing] a more positive and creative role in its life today'.(236)

Within the U.N. context the impact of the arms race on economic development is highlighted.(237) Referring to a number of

studies on the relationship between disarmament and development, including the work of Bruce Russett, the bishops seem to rest content with having raised the question. Those involved in defence-related industry might well feel that more work on the the impact of disarmament which they would experience could legitimately have featured.

The bishops conclude by restating the 'moral challenge of interdependence', which will be faced once the nuclear threat is lifted.(238)

IV PASTORAL CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

Paragraphs #274-329

The final section of the Pastoral, by far the shortest, moves from the general consideration of the shape of the new international order to the domestic context. Here the contours of the bishops' audiences are clearly delineated, as they address particular constituencies within the church and American society, seeking to identify courses of research or action consonant with their impact of the Pastoral.

IVA. The Church: A Community of Conscience, Prayer and Penance Paragraphs#274-278)

Thus, they begin with an ecclesiological statement. Now attention is less on the relations of the American church to Rome or between different national hierarchies and much more centred on the American context. In developing this ecclesiological statement the bishops acknowledge their dependence on the work of Avery Dulles. Employing rather a defensive tone, laying stress on themes of persecution, opposition and minority status, the bishops' intention seems to be to confront the individual Catholic with the need to respond to the teaching they offer.

IVB. Elements of a Pastoral Response Paragraphs #279-300

In elaborating a 'pastoral response' to the Pastoral the bishops begin by urging dioceses and parishes to develop educational programmes on issues of war and peace. With a by now ritual acknowledgement of the different levels of authority within the text they urge the use of the Letter 'in its entirety' to act as a guide and framework for such programmes.(239) The bishops seem to be aiming for a two-track approach to the educational task. Diversity is legitimate, as those who agree on principles

or ends seek those ends in different ways. Diversity between the conclusions of 'religious groups' and 'people of good will' demands mutual respect.(240) Yet this diversity does not extend to an acceptance of the view that the church should have no voice in such a debate.(241) Moreover the bishops are prescriptive about the content of the educational programmes. Authoritative church teaching is to be applied to concrete situations and legitimate options set out. The bishops identify two extremes of opinion which must be guarded against: deafness to the clear teaching of Pope and Council; and eagerness to make mandatory what may be legitimate but cannot be made obligatory on the basis of church teaching.(242)

Thus, the diversity of the Catholic constituency is acknowledged, and the bishops seek to call to the support of their teaching document all the pressure they can in favour of its study and reception.

Having targeted in a section on 'formation of conscience' those who could be expected to resist the specificity of the Letter by calling its legitimacy into question, the bishops then target another group. In a section headed 'True Peace calls for "Reverence for Life"', they set the teaching on peace in the context of the dignity of the human person, and proceed to link the questions surrounding nuclear conflict with abortion.

'We know that millions of men and women of good will, of all religious persuasions, join us in our commitment to try to reduce the horrors of war, and particularly to assure that nuclear weapons will never again be used, by any nation, anywhere, for any reason. Millions join us in our 'no' to nuclear war, in the certainty that nuclear war would inevitably result in the killing of millions of innocent human beings, directly or indirectly. Yet many part ways with us in our efforts to reduce the horror of abortion and our 'no' to war on innocent human life in the womb, killed not indirectly, but directly.'(243)

This signals not only a token passage in the direction of an important lobby within the Church, but the beginning of an approach to moral issues developed by Joseph Bernardin.(244)

After some conventional exhortation to the whole Catholic community to see in prayer, liturgy and penance acts conducive to peace, the Pastoral turns to address particular audiences.(245)

C. CHALLENGE AND HOPE

Paragraphs #301-329

This address is set in the context of a note of challenge to the American Experience. All American Catholics, the bishops write, are bound in loyalty to the values of peace, justice, and security for the whole human family.(246) These values are a standard against which national goals and policies must be measured. Part of that measuring leads to the shaping of a climate of opinion in which 'profound sorrow' can be expressed for the atomic bombing in 1945.

'Without that sorrow, there is no possibility of finding a way to repudiate future use of nuclear weapons or of conventional weapons in such military actions as would not fulfill just-war criteria'(247)

The main features of interest in the address to particular groups lie in the way in which they reveal the bishops' anticipation of qualification and reaction. Thus, for the clergy, there is the recognition that

'this letter and the new obligations it could present to the faithful may create difficulties for you in dealing with those you serve.'(248)

Addressing educators at all levels the bishops defend peace education from the charge that it weakens the nation's will.(249) Pope John Paul has singled out young people as the hope of the future, the bishops write, and they are addressed primarily in relation to future work and to civic responsibilities.(250)

Greatest space is devoted to men and women in military service (251), of particular concern to Bishop O'Connor. The tone is broadly affirming, taking a cue from the Pastoral Constitution.

The method employed is to reaffirm the vocation of the military profession, and then to reassert the specific moral demands which are particular to it, all of which are related to just-war ius in bello categories. The immunity of the civilian population is affirmed:

'the question is not whether certain measures are unlawful or forbidden in warfare, but which measures: to refuse to take such actions is not an act of cowardice or treason, but one of courage and patriotism.'(252)

Particular concern is expressed about the effect on the armed forces themselves of participation in conflict, even when employing legitimate means.

'Are they treated merely as instruments of war, insensitive as the weapons they use? With what moral or emotional experiences do they return from war and attempt to resume normal civilian lives? How does their experience affect society? How are they treated socially?'(253)

Surely the unspoken agenda here is that set by the difficulties experienced within American society by those returning from combat in Vietnam?

The wider implication is stated in #313

'One of the most difficult problems of war involves defending a free society without destroying the values that give it meaning and validity.

Within this the bishops note the contribution of clergy and religious ministering to those in the armed forces.

Pastoral care for those employed within the defence industries is something the bishops reserve to themselves.(254) The arena of choice, personal, professional, and financial, is one in which the bishops seek to contribute. Although reference is made to those who may wish to disengage from such work nothing in this section leads to decisions other than on an individual basis. It is directed at individual workers, and apart from a brief passing reference to those who 'earn a profit from the weapons industry' there is little here which considers the issue of exploitation in the arms race or gives a sign of the church's

willingness to engage with the whole nexus of the military-industrial complex.

The address to the scientific community is couched in very general language.(255) Approval of the education of nuclear physicists and scientists in the medical consequences of nuclear war is set alongside recognition of the contribution of social scientists to the work of the Pastoral, the 'work of relating moral wisdom and political reality.'(256)

As the bishops look ahead to the reception of the document they draw attention to the contribution of the media:

'on the quality of your efforts depends in great measure the opportunity the general public will have for understanding this letter.'(257)

If the bishops listened to public officials in developing their teaching document, what do they say to them? As the aim of the document was to build a new consensus, so now public officials are called upon to be attentive:

'Public officials in a democracy must both lead and listen: they are ultimately dependent upon a public consensus to sustain policy. We urge you to lead with courage and to listen to the public debate with sensitivity'.(258)

But they also identify a proactive role. The Pastoral indicates the need for an initiative to examine the problems and challenges posed by nuclear disarmament on the domestic economy.(259) They also suggest the role of public officials in protecting true freedom of conscience.(260)

Finally in this section the bishops address 'Catholics as citizens'.(261) In this they set out explicitly their understanding of the role of the church in American society.

In a democracy, they write, there is a coinherence of the responsibility of the nation and its citizens. Thus they imply that 'national interest' and 'patriotism' are not separable from that consensus of citizen opinion which they seek to mould, and

loyalty to American ideals is not in tension with that wider vision of the world which they see reflected in the Pastoral Constitution.(262) Indeed all citizens are called upon to examine the role of the U.S. in world affairs, testing its action against 'its full potential as an agent of peace with justice for all people'(263), Catholic citizens having regard to the universal principles of the church. The precise relationship of the two is outlined in the penultimate paragraph.

It is the church's task, enabled by the freedoms implicit in a pluralistic democracy, to help call attention to the moral dimensions of public issue. This call will at times, it is implied, be seen as dissent from or as intrusion in public policy.(264) Drawing attention to their post-conciliar Pastoral Human Life in Our Day, the bishops speak of political dissent in a democratic system as a 'fundamental right' while it is the 'duty' of the governed to analyze concrete issues of policy.(265)

In living out this vocation, which is one for all citizens in a pluralistic democracy, the bishops claim no special place for the church. In this respect the bishops speak as citizens. The church has a role, however, which goes beyond these examples of effective citizen participation. Its task is 'to help call attention to the moral dimension of public issues'.(266)

When these vocations are lived out the church helps create a community of conscience in the wider civil community, one predicated not only on the moral dimensions of policy, which is the peculiar province of the church, but on that task of dissent and scrutiny which is the responsibility of all who live within a democracy. The bishops may indeed speak 'as pastors, not politicians...teachers not technicians' (267) but their pastoral teaching, which is brought to an end by an evocation of the Kingdom, is strengthened both in its pastoral implications and the quality of its teaching by its readiness to listen, learn, and speak in the world of politicians and technicians to which The Challenge of Peace was delivered.

FOOTNOTES

1. see R Latourelle, Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives Twenty-five Years After 1962 - 1987, Vol. 3, Paulist Press 1989.
especially Joseph Joblin, 'The Implications of the Teaching of Gaudium et Spes on Peace', pp482-495.
Hervé Carrier, 'The Contribution of the Council to Culture', pp442-465.
2. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World: Gaudium et Spes.
References are to the text in
Austin Flannery ed., Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents Dublin, Dominican Publications, 1975, pp903-1001.
3. The Challenge of Peace, paragraph #7.
4. Charles Curran, 'The Moral Methodology of the Bishops' Pastoral' in
Philip Murnion ed., Catholics and Nuclear War, op cit., pp45-56. Reference of p45.
5. The Challenge of Peace, #2,4.
6. Pastoral Constitution, op.cit., #77.
7. The Challenge of Peace, #4.
8. Ibid., #2.
9. Ibid., #2,4.
10. Ibid., #7.
11. Ibid.
12. 'Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation: Dei Verbum', Flannery, op.cit., pp750-765.
13. The Challenge of Peace, #6.
14. see discussion below 'The Bishops on Deterrence: an evaluation.
15. see Schotte Memorandum, op.cit.
16. The Challenge of Peace, #9,10.
17. footnote #4, The Challenge of Peace.
note #1 of Pastoral Constitution.
18. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.

19. The Challenge of Peace, #10.
20. Ibid., #12.
 '...on some complex social question, the Church expects a certain diversity of views even though all hold the same universal moral principles'
 cf. Pastoral Constitution #43.
21. The Challenge of Peace, #12.
22. Curran, 'The Moral Methodology of the Bishops' Pastoral, op.cit., p54-55:
 'The approach taken by the pastoral tries to avoid two extreme positions. Some claim that the bishops as official church teachers have no right or competence to speak on such complex issues as military and political strategy... Others claim that church teachers or believers can have great certitude on these questions. Against these positions the bishops assert their right and obligation to speak out on such specific issues but admit their lack of absolute certitude... such specific judgments are truly moral judgments even though they involve much political science and many prudential interpretations.'
23. Ibid., p55.
 'It seems likely that recognition in the pastoral letter that dissent in the Roman Catholic church is possible on complex specific issues is bound to have some repercussions in other areas of moral teaching and church life.'
24. Pastoral Constitution, #80.
25. The Challenge of Peace, #25.
26. Ibid., #302-329.
 William Murnion expresses scepticism about the bishops' declared intention to address two audiences, to help form Catholic conscience and contribute to the public policy debate, Do they in fact address two distinct but overlapping audiences as #17 suggests?
 'What would be the purpose of forming the consciences of Catholics except to get them to shape public opinion and how could they expect to contribute to the public debate except by forming the consciences of the wider political community?
 Is it not rather that the bishops [convoked] a homogeneous audience, without distinction of religion and perhaps not of nationality?'
 Murnion concludes:
 'For all the overt diffidence in how they assert their authority, they are acting as if they believe their mission, and indeed their authority, as bishops of the church extends to this wider non-Catholic community...?'
 William Murnion, 'The Role and Language of the Church in Relation to Public Policy', in
 Philip Murnion ed., Catholics and Nuclear War, op.cit., pp64-65.

27. The Challenge of Peace, #19.
28. Ibid., #27.
29. Ibid., #29.
30. Castelli, op.cit., p87.
Originally this had been used as a section-title by Russett.
O'Connor suggested it as a title for the Pastoral.
31. see especially Dean Curry ed., Evangelicals and the Bishops'
Pastoral Letter, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1984.
32. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
'With regard to the use of Scripture, the U.S. Bishops had
said in their opening statement that
 "We are rewriting the Scriptural section to provide a
 more comprehensive review of relevant texts, and to
 attempt a better integration of the biblical data and
 theological reflection on it in the Pastoral.'"'
33. The Challenge of Peace, #31.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid., #32.
36. Ibid., #35.
37. Ibid., #36-38.
38. footnote #13: this 'omission' in the New Testament is
 'significant'.
39. The Challenge of Peace, #47.
40. Ibid., #51.
41. Ibid., #53.
42. Ibid., #55.
43. John Bray, 'Biblical Peace and the Kingdom of God',
 in Dean Curry ed., op.cit., pp23-31.
 reference is on p31.
44. Ibid., p29.
45. Ibid., p30.
46. The traditional tension felt by the American Catholic had
 been less that between being a follower of Christ and a
 citizen, than the tension set up by the church as a
 transnational agency and the state which saw in the church a
 rival for primary loyalty.

47. Quentin Quesnell, 'Hermeneutical Prologomena to a Pastoral Letter', in Charles Reid Jr., ed., Peace in a Nuclear Age: The Bishops' Pastoral Letter in Perspective, Washington D.C., Catholic University Press, 1986, p3-19.
48. Ibid., p18.
49. One element in that character is the role of mediation in ethical discourse. Charles Curran calls it
'the most distinctive aspect of Roman Catholic ethics.
Thus 'one cannot jump immediately from scriptural citations to complex specific moral issues without the mediating use of reason.'
Reason and the contribution of the social sciences help specific ethical conclusions emerge and promote concrete moral reflection. At the same time this concreteness is modified by the recognition that solutions employing such data cannot claim too great a certitude.
Charles Curran, Directions in Catholic Social Ethics, Notre Dame Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1985, references on pp202-203.
50. The Challenge of Peace, #62.
51. Ibid., #63.
Two paragraphs later the bishops draw attention to the treatment of war and peace in the Pastoral Constitution: peace is addressed in the context of the nature and destiny of the human person, and then only as an indispensable condition for creating a more genuinely human world.
52. This is not to diminish the significance of statements made by the popes of the nuclear age at every level from encyclicals to the catechetical homilies delivered at general audiences. In 1982 a joint production by the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Commission Iustitia et Pax brought together documents on peace from both sources. In the introduction to the Roman Catholic material the editor wrote:
'The question of disarmament has been one of the major concerns of the Supreme Magisterium of the Catholic Church in the whole field of peace... In approaching the texts gathered here one must be aware of the particular nature of these discourses and messages in order to grasp correctly the weight and the importance of the teaching that each one contains... It is addressed first and foremost to political leaders and statesmen... [and] to inform and guide Catholics and all men and women of good will.'
There was, of course, no mention of the teaching activity of bishops and theologians on the issue of disarmament and peace. The collection was published in 1982, in the same year as the Rome 'informal consultation' on The Challenge of Peace. Jan Schotte was co-author of the preface.
Peace and Disarmament: Documents of the World Council of Churches and Roman Catholic Church, published jointly by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the

W.C.C. and Pontifical Commission Iustitia et Pax,
Geneva/Vatican City, 1982.

53. Octogesima Adveniens, paragraph 46, in
Joseph Gremillion ed., The Gospel of Peace and Justice,
Maryknoll, New York, Orbis Books, 1976.
54. Ibid. #4.
55. Synod of Bishops, 'Justice in the World', 1971 #6-9 in
Austin Flannery ed., Vatican Council II: More Post-conciliar
Documents, Dublin, Dominican Publications, 1983., p696.
56. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
57. Curran comments on the Pastoral:
'Such an eschatology and anthropology cannot support a
totally pacifist position but rather ground the just-war
theory which is developed and applied in the letter. It
should be noted that the bishops rightly recognise the
possibility of pacifism and non-violence as a legitimate
option for individuals, but not for governments at the
present time, precisely because of their eschatology.'
Curran 'The Moral Methodology of the Bishops' Pastoral'
in Murnion op.cit., p51.
58. William Murnion op.cit., p67.
59. Robert Murray, 'Revelation' in
Adrian Hastings ed., Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and
after, London, S.P.C.K., 1991, p81.
60. The Challenge of Peace, #70.
61. Ibid., #73.
62. Ibid., #78.
63. Ibid., #73.
64. Ibid., #74 introduces the idea of the complementary
relationship between the moral response offered by those who
bear arms and those who refuse.
65. see especially John XXIII Pacem in Terris, #80-145,
in Gremillion op.cit.
66. The Challenge of Peace, #88.
for a pungent account of the reaction of the Catholic
leadership to the Vietnam War see
D.O'Brien, 'American Catholic Opposition to the Vietnam War:
a Preliminary Assessment'
in Thomas Shannon ed., War of Peace?: The Search for New
Answers, New York, Orbis, 1980, pp119-150,
especially pp143-144.
67. The Challenge of Peace, #92.

68. Ibid., #93.
69. Ibid, footnote #38 to para.#100
70. Ibid., #102.
71. Pastoral Constitution, op.cit., #80.
72. The Challenge of Peace, #105.
73. Ibid., #106.
74. see quotation on main text.
75. The Challenge of Peace, #118.
76. Ibid., #121.
77. see Francis Meehan, 'Nonviolence and the Bishops' Pastoral: A Case for a Development of Doctrine' in Judith Dwyer, ed., The Catholic Bishops and Nuclear War, Washington D.C., Georgetown University Press, 1984, pp87-107.
78. James Dougherty, op.cit., p128.
79. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
80. Dougherty, op.cit., p13.
81. Ibid.
82. Meehan, op.cit., pp95-97.
83. Ibid., pp95-96.
84. Ibid., p96.
85. James Finn, 'Pacifism and Just War: Either or Neither' in Philip Murnion ed., op.cit., pp132-145, reference on pp143-144.
86. Ibid.
87. Dougherty, op.cit., pp131-132.
88. Curran, Directions in Catholic Social Ethics, op.cit., pp216-217.
89. The Challenge of Peace, #125.
90. Ibid., #122.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid., #123.

93. Ibid., #125.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid., #128.
96. Ibid., footnote #56.
97. Ibid., footnote #57,
98. Ibid., footnote #59.
99. Ibid., #129.
100. Ibid., #130.
101. Ibid., #131.
102. Origins, 13:29, December 29th 1983.
103. Ibid., p492.
104. Ibid.
 George Weigel is scathing in his attack on what he calls the 'Catholic Establishment' view articulated by Bernardin here:
 "According to this view, a brave group of bishops, often beset by conservative lay opposition and stoutly resisting government pressure, applied the age-old wisdom of the Roman Catholic tradition... and pointed the way beyond our present peace-and-security dilemma to a strategy that is more congruent with Catholic social ethics than current U.S. policy... the central claim is this: the Pastoral decisively shaped the current nuclear strategy discussions, at least in terms of defining the key questions that must be answered by policymakers interested in forging enough public consensus to sustain a coherent strategic policy over time."
 George Weigel, 'The Bishops' Pastoral Letter and American Culture: Who was Influencing Whom?', in Charles Reid, ed., op.cit., pp171-189. Reference on pp172-173.
105. Ibid.
106. Prominent in this establishment conspiracy, in Weigel's view, are 'certain elements in the professional arms control community'. He includes them in a hit-list which he accuses of 'ideological selectivity' and which features also Physicians for Social Responsibility, Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign, the dominant wing of the Democratic Party, the National Council of Churches. This 'selectivity' is characterized by concentration on issues such as the nuclear freeze, the MX debate and the argument over first use of nuclear weapons in Europe.
 Weigel sees the bishops as influenced rather than influencing, and therefore, failing to enable the public debate which they seek to reconstitute.
 Weigel, in Reid op.cit., pp178-179.

For an account of the differing attitudes towards arms control within the Reagan Administration see Strobe Talbot, Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control, London, Pan, 1985.

107. The Challenge of Peace, #132-138.
108. Ibid., #132.
109. Ibid., #134,135.
110. Ibid., #138.
111. Ibid., #139.
112. Ibid., #141.
'We seek to encourage a public attitude which sets stringent limits on the kind of actions our own government and other governments will take on nuclear policy.'
113. Ibid.
114. Origins, 13:34, February 2nd 1984, pp566-569.
115. Weigel in Reid, ed., op.cit., p187.
116. The Challenge of Peace, #141.
117. Ibid., #143.
118. Ibid., #144.
119. Ibid.
120. Ibid., #147.
121. Ibid., #148 refers to 'wholly innocent lives, lives of people who are in no way responsible for reckless actions of their government.'
122. Ibid., #148.
123. Ibid.
Francis Winters points to a feature of nuclear warfare which illuminates the distinction between combatant and non-combatant. He suggests that in a nuclear exchange the combatants would be relatively few in number and invulnerable in comparison to the rest of the population. Francis Winters, 'Morality in the War Room', America, 132, February 15th 1975, pp106-110.
William O'Brien seems to cast doubt on the usefulness of such a stress on non-combatant immunity for another reason. He argues that applying the principle of discrimination is not possible in the context of a nuclear exchange. He seeks to restore it as not an absolute principle but one intended to minimise the destruction of civilian, non-

combatant targets.

William O'Brien, 'Just-war Doctrine in a Nuclear Context', Theological Studies, 44, June 1983, pp211-212.

124. The Challenge of Peace, #150.

125. Ibid., footnote #67 refers to the influential article by McGeorge Bundy et al in Foreign Affairs and the response to it by K Kaiser et.al.

M Bundy, GF Kennan, RS McNamara and G Smith, 'Nuclear Weapons and the Atlantic Alliance', Foreign Affairs, 60, (1982), pp753-768.

K Kaiser, G Leher, A Merter and FJ Schulze, 'Nuclear Weapons and the Preservation of Peace', Foreign Affairs, 60, (1982), pp1157-1170.

126. The Challenge of Peace, #152.

127. Ibid., footnote #69.

128. see Michael Quinlan, Theological Studies, 48, March, 1987, pp3-24.

Quinlan stresses the distinction between 'first use' and 'first strike' and argues that NATO's 'flexible response' is distinct from both. He is unimpressed by the argument against first use on the grounds of the risk of escalation:

"If the nature of this risk is regarded as an overriding argument against the defender's running it, the only logical conclusion in the face of a determined nuclear power is pacifism and willingness to take all its consequences."

A 'no first use' promise, he argues, would weaken deterrence by diminishing the adversary's expectation of risk without diminishing the risk of war.

see also his 'Nuclear Weapons: The Basic Issues', Ampleforth Journal, Volume XCI Part II, Autumn 1986, pp61-70.

129. Ibid., #153.

130. 'The rationale of the pastoral's prohibition of first use should be seen in the light of a general theme of the letter. In a series of judgments the bishops seek to build a multidimensional barrier against resort to nuclear weapons, to insulate them, as much as possible, from quick, early or easy use. The specific support the bishops give to a 'no first use' position should be seen as a dimension of this larger theme...'

J Bryan Hehir, 'The Context of the Moral-Strategic Debate and the Contribution of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' in Reid, ed., op.cit., pp137-158.

Reference is on p149.

131. The Challenge of Peace, #161.

Hehir promotes the just-war principles of discrimination and proportionality by his stress on the psychological impact of moving from conventional to nuclear weaponry. The introduction of nuclear weapons, he argues, brings about a qualitative change in the nature of the warfare and he is,

therefore, hostile to those developments in nuclear weapon technology which blur this distinction.

see RA Gessert and JB Hehir, The New Nuclear Debate, New York, Council of Religion and International Affairs, 1976, pp49-50.

132. Richard McCormick, 'Notes on Moral Theology, 1982', Theological Studies, 44, March 1983, p110.
133. Dwyer shows how Winters' position has changed from arguing for the justifiable use of nuclear weapons in counterstrategic defence to a condemnation of all use. That transformation seems to have occurred in 1975-76. see Judith Dwyer, 'The Morality of Using Nuclear Weapons', in Dwyer, ed., op.cit., pp3-21. Reference on pp9-10.
134. see David Hollenbach, Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: A Christian Moral Argument, Ramsey, N.J., Paulist Press, 1983. and 'Nuclear Weapons and Nuclear War: The Shape of the Catholic Debate', Theological Studies, 43, December 1982, pp577-605
135. see especially Charles Curran, American Catholic Social Ethics: Twentieth Century Approaches, Notre Dame Ind., University of Notre Dame Press, 1982.
136. Winters, 'Cultural Context of the Pastoral letter on Peace', in Reid, ed., op.cit.
Winters was a contributor to the Bernardin committee process.
137. Hollenbach in Theological Studies, op.cit., p600
138. see William O'Brien, The Conduct of Just and Limited War, New York, Praeger, 1981,
and 'The Challenge of War: A Christian Realist Perspective', in Dwyer, ed., op.cit., pp39-63.
O'Brien is listed as one of the 'moral theologian-ethicists' who appeared before the Bernadin Committee.
139. see John Langan, 'The American Hierarchy and Nuclear Weapons', Theological Studies, 43, 1982, 447-467.
'Struggling for Moral Clarity about Nuclear Deterrence: David Hollenbach and Michael Novak', Thought, 59, 1984, pp91-98.
140. John Courtney Murray, 'Remarks on the Moral Problem of War', Theological Studies, 20, 1959, pp40-60.
141. Castelli, op.cit., pp169-170.
142. see Langan, 'The American Hierarchy and Nuclear Weapons', op.cit.
143. see, for example, Bernardin at Chicago Meeting, Castelli, op.cit., p170.

144. see Weigel, op.cit., p319.
145. The Challenge of Peace, #162.
146. Ibid., #163.
147. Ibid., #166.
148. Ibid., #173
149. Joseph Boyle concludes that the reasons the Pastoral advances make the moral character doubtful, and no suggestion is given as to why these reasons do not absolutely exclude it.
see Joseph Boyle Jr., 'The Challenge of Peace and the Morality of Nuclear Deterrence', in Reid, ed., op.cit., pp322-335.
150. William O'Brien in Dwyer, ed., op.cit., p39.
151. The Challenge of Peace, #178.
152. Ibid., #179.
If the bishops made this one of their most focused pieces of investigation what has it yielded? For Bruce Russett it has provided a valuable public service, extracting the sting of ambiguity from American strategic policy and winning from the Administration a clear disavowal of the intention to mount a direct attack on civilian population centres. Russett, 'The Doctrine of Deterrence', in Murnion, op.cit., p158.
Joseph Boyle is not so convinced. He is sceptical about the status of assurances given by officials, and whether they are synonymous with government policy. Boyle also draws a distinction between the intention to kill innocents and the targeting of civilian populations, and argues that by concentrating on targeting policy as the indicator of intention the bishops leave much unexplored. Boyle, 'The Challenge of Peace', in Reid, op.cit., pp325-328.
153. The Challenge of Peace, #180.
154. Ibid.
155. Ibid., #184.
156. Ibid., #185.
157. Ibid., footnote #84.
158. Ibid., #191.
159. Ibid., footnote #85.
160. Ibid., #92.

161. Ibid., #194.
162. Francis Winters, 'U.S. bishops' arms letter: a compromise?', The Month, Vol. CCXLV:1392, Second New Series 16:9, pp293-297. Reference p295.
see also Francis Winters, 'Did the Bishops ban the Bomb? Yes and No', America, September 10th 1983, pp104-108. Reference p106.
163. Peter Berger, 'Empirical Testings', in Myers ed., op.cit., p110.
'It is clear that a papal encyclical must be understood in terms of a very complex ecclesial, political and theological context...yet this encyclical...is explicitly addressed to a much wider audience... I can only comment on this document as it stands on its own and as if it were written by anyone seeking to instruct me in this area.
164. Bryan Hehir writes of the 'direct linkage' between the Pastoral Constitution and the Pastoral Letter which is 'more visible here than on any other topic.'
in P Murnion, ed., op.cit., p78.
For the history of the conciliar text at this point see H Vorgrimler, ed., Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, Vol. V, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. Herder & Herder, New York, /Burns & Oates, London, 1969. Vol 5, pp328-369.
see also G Baum and D Campion, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World of Vatican II, New York, Paulist Press, 1967.
165. Vorgrimler, op.cit., p359.
166. Vincent Yzermans, ed., American Participation in the Second Vatican Council, New York, Sheed & Ward, 1967.
167. Ibid., p220.
168. Ibid.
René Coste comments:
'We have a right to ask whether this American bomb was well-advised, for precisely at that time and for long after, American policy was the subject of much controversy because of Vietnam.'
Vorgrimler, ed., op.cit., p345.
Coste was an 'expert' accompanying the French bishops at the Rome Consultation in January 1983.
169. 'Human Life in Our Day', in Nolan, ed. Reference at #111.
170. Ibid.
George Weigel comments:
'By 1968... the bishops were describing arms competition as an action/reaction cycle that decreased both security and stability.'
Weigel, Tranquillitas Ordinis, op.cit., p258.

171. To Live in Christ Jesus, op.cit., p34
172. Origins, 9:13, September 13th, 1979, pp195-199.
173. Francis Winters calls it 'a very quiet beginning to a revolution... what may come to be regarded as the most decisive Catholic contribution to the public policy debate in American history remained almost completely a secret for more than a year.'
'U.S. Bishops and the Arms Race', The Month, CCXLIV No.1379, Second New Series, 15:8, August 1982, pp260-265.
174. Krol in Origins, 9:13, op.cit., pp195-196.
175. Ibid., p196.
176. 'Pastoral Constitution' in ed. Flannery op.cit., #80.
177. Ibid., p197.
178. Ibid.
179. Ibid., p199.
180. Hollenbach, 'Nuclear Weapons', Theological Studies, op.cit., p600-601.
181. Richard McCormick, 'Nuclear Deterrence and the Problem of Intention: A Review of the Positions', in P. Murnion, ed., op.cit., p178.
182. O'Brien in Dwyer, ed., op.cit., p45.
183. Ibid., p47.
184. Ibid., p46.
185. The Challenge of Peace, #252.
'A glory of the United States is the range of political freedoms its system permits us... Free people must always pay a proportionate price and run some risks - responsibly - to preserve their freedom.'
186. It is worth recalling Hehir's comment quoted in Gremillion, The Church and Culture since Vatican II, op.cit., p132,
'It is within the competence of the U.S. bishops to comment on the impact of American foreign policy on the situation in the other country or region. It is not our business to tell other episcopates or countries what they should do.'
187. O'Brien, op.cit., p48.
188. Ibid., p44.
189. Ibid., p39-40.

190. John Courtney Murray, 'Remarks on the Moral Problems of War', op.cit., pp40-60.
191. Ibid., p54.
192. Ibid.
193. Ibid., p59.
194. see O'Brien in Dwyer, ed., op.cit., p52.
195. John Courtney Murray, 'Remarks on the Moral Problems of War', op.cit., p52.
196. Michael Novak, Moral Clarity in the Nuclear Age, Nelson, Nashville, 1983, pp23-77.
197. Origins, 19:39, March 1st 1990, p631.
198. Ibid., p632.
199. Ibid. Bernardin identifies the espousal of this view in the 1960's by Paul Ramsey and John Courtney Murray and in the 1980's by William O'Brien, James Johnson and Albert Wohlstetter.
200. Ibid., p633.
201. Ibid.
202. Ibid., p634.
203. John Paul II at Bagington Airport, Coventry, #2, Origins, 12, 1982, :55.
204. The Challenge of Peace, #201.
205. Ibid., #202.
206. Ibid., #204.
207. Ibid., #205.
208. Ibid.
209. Ibid., #207.
210. Ibid., #209-210.
211. Ibid., #211.
212. Ibid., #213.
213. Ibid., #216.
214. Ibid., #217.

215. Ibid., #220.
216. The Challenge of Peace, 21-230.
217. 'Pastoral Constitution', in Flannery, ed., op.cit., #78.
see also The Challenge of Peace, #118.
218. The Challenge of Peace, #223.
219. Ibid., #225.
220. Ibid., 231-233.
221. Ibid., footnote #99.
222. Ibid., #232.
223. Ibid., #233.
224. Ibid., #234
The reference is to Populorum Progressio.
225. The Challenge of Peace, #237.
226. Ibid., #239.
227. Ibid., #240.
228. Ibid., #243.
229. Ibid., #245.
230. Ibid., #258.
231. Ibid., #250-251.
The limitations of America's living out of its ideals are stated, but immediately qualified.
232. Ibid., #259.
233. Ibid., #260.
234. Origins, 9:19, October 25th 1979, pp310-312.
Later in that speech the Pope spoke of the public role of the Catholic community:
'Catholics of the U.S.... you also participate in the nation's affairs within the framework of institutions and organizations springing from the nation's common history and from your common concern. This you do hand in hand with your fellow citizens of every creed and confession. Unity among you in all such endeavours is essential under the leadership of your bishops... It is principally the task of lay people to put [shared convictions] into practice in concrete projects, to define priorities and to develop models that are suitable for promoting man's real good.'

235. The Challenge of Peace, #265.
see Giovanni Cheli, 'La Place et le Rôle du Saint-Siège dans les Institutions Internationales', in J-B d'Onorio, Le Saint-Siège dans les Relations Internationales, Paris, Cerf, 1989, pp87-100.
236. The Challenge of Peace, #268.
237. Ibid., #269.
238. Ibid., #273.
239. Ibid., #280.
240. Ibid., #282.
241. Ibid., #281.
242. Ibid., #283.
243. Ibid., #287.
244. The so-called 'seamless garment' or 'consistent ethic'.
245. In a book which is hostile to the way the Pastoral was promoted by the educational agencies of the church, and like other critical works carrying a foreword by Cardinal O'Connor, Betraying the Bishops by Matthew Murphy gives some idea of the range of initiatives taken by the church at national and diocesan level. Fortunately, it would seem that many of them displayed more imagination than the bishops do here in their conventional exhortations to fast and pray.
Matthew Murphy, Betraying the Bishops: How the Pastoral Letter on War and Peace is being taught, Washington D.C., Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1987.
246. The Challenge of Peace, #301.
247. Ibid., #302.
248. Ibid., #303.
249. Ibid., #304.
250. Ibid., #307.
251. Ibid., #309-317.
In July 1981 Francis Winters wrote:
'At present it is estimated that approximately 30% of the U.S. Army personnel are Catholic... Just at the moment, then, when Catholics are coming of age politically in the United States, they are thrust into the dilemma of choosing between politics and religion. To which of their responsibilities will they conform, and from which withdraw? Must they now choose between their constitutional responsibilities and their conscience, enlightened by the

church?'

Francis Winters, 'The Bow or the Cloud?', America, July 25th 1981, pp26-32.

In fact the choice Winters described was far too dramatic.

252. Ibid., #311.

253. Ibid., #314.

254. Ibid., #318.

'We seek as moral teachers and pastors to be available to all who confront these questions of personal and vocational choice.'

255. Ibid., #319.

256. Ibid., #321.

257. Ibid., #322.

258. Ibid., #323.

259. Ibid., #324.

260. Ibid.

261. Ibid., #326-329.

262. Ibid., #326-327.

263. Ibid., #327.

264. Ibid., #328.

265. Ibid.

266. Ibid.

267. 'Summary' of the Pastoral Letter in P Murnion, ed., op.cit., pp249-254. Reference p254.

CHAPTER 4

Creating a Community of Conscience:
The Ecclesial Context

'...Siddown, you're rockin' the boat!'

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CREATING A COMMUNITY OF CONSCIENCE
THE ECCLESIAL CONTEXT

'He who travels in the barque of Peter had better not look too close into the engine-room'

Mgr. Ronald Knox

A previous section sought to demonstrate some of the features of the national context of the Pastoral Letter. In their search to create a community of conscience within the United States the bishops addressed their teaching not simply to the Catholic community but to the nation as a whole. This address was made possible by what has been called the 'new moment' for the American Catholic community, and the bishops' response to that moment in their teaching initiative was itself an indication of a fresh understanding of the place of the church in American society. It was suggested that the political dynamics of the United States, in particular the way in which its tradition of church-state separation is modified by the potential for the church to exercise a culture-forming role, provided an opening for a Catholic church newly confident as the result of changes within its constituency.

The Pastoral was not only offered to an American audience, it belonged also within the wider context of the church. If the Pastoral was an American document, it was self-evidently a Catholic document. If it was part of the American public policy debate on war and peace, it was also part of the whole church's teaching vocation. As the debate within the national context reveals an interplay between the American church and its culture, so the debate within the ecclesial context reveals an interplay between the national and the international, the American hierarchy and Rome, and indeed the interplay of forces within the American church itself. To categorize this dynamic takes us into differing models of what it means for the church to be the church, and various responses to the ecclesiological landscape of

the post-conciliar age. Our focus in this wide-ranging debate will be on one of the points of tension, namely the role, purpose and power of episcopal conferences. Far from being an arcane intramural matter, this emerges as one of the litmus tests of the changed ecclesiological realities of the church. The Pastoral, especially in the method which the hierarchy chose to adopt in its construction, offers a way of understanding the tensions present within the church as it continues to respond to the conciliar challenge. In this section it will be argued that such tensions are not best described in adversarial terms, although at times the language is that of confrontation. Rather, what we see revealed is the unavoidably painful process of a church coming to terms with an experience of pluralism which, in institutional terms, it is not best suited for. As the address to the American context of the church presented many perils for the unwary traveller, so this debate within the church exposes the outsider to similar hazards. In the end, it may be life in the engine-room rather than the view from the masthead which dictates the course taken by the barque of Peter.

THE DIFFICULT NECESSITY OF SPEAKING ABOUT POWER IN THE CHURCH

'En Catholicisme, le pouvoir s'avance toujours sous le masque du sacré, c'est-à-dire peu ou prou de l'interdit.' (1)

The difficulties we face in characterizing the operation of power within the church are not simply those faced by any outsider in relation to a complex institution. The German sociologist Karl Gabriel has written of the pervasive difficulty of analysing the operation of power in general within the contemporary church, a difficulty created by two factors. (2)

First, there is an inbuilt Christian ambivalence about using the category of power to describe the life of the church, a reluctance born of its apparent contradiction of the Gospel virtues of weakness and powerlessness. Stephen Sykes calls this tendency within the Christian community the

'power-rejection tradition which sees the divine self-abnegation as a complete reversal of merely human values, and as a more or less realised rejection of all power as dominating or enslaving'.(3)

Sykes employs categories developed by Ralph Dahrendorf to suggest that this pattern of power-rejection is linked to the utopian tradition in Western thought which sees order within society as something promoted by agreement or consensus. Where power is given consideration it is seen as a facility for achieving the common good, and is dependent on shared values and norms. We may assume that in this tradition power within the church may be a cloaked phenomenon, masquerading under other guises. It will value highly the construction of consensus, and will be nervous of overt conflict.

The parallel tendency, that of power-acceptance, is linked to Dahrendorf's category of the rationalist tradition. Here there will be a greater willingness to see history in terms of conflict, even the cosmic conflict of good and evil. Such a rationalist reading of power within a church would see the need to subsume other parts of the church's life in order to be

faithful to its task.

'Despite the obvious attractions of a utopian view of the internal power relations of the church...within its own borders it has still to be vigilant against internal subversion. Legitimate power and authority belong, therefore, to a ruling élite, whose God-given task is to make the society of the church cohere by means which do not exclude the use of coercion, as a last resort.'(4)

When we come to consider the ecclesiological debate over the role and task of episcopal conferences it would be appropriate to have in mind this way of characterizing attitudes towards power within the Catholic church. It may indicate that to speak of power within the church, although difficult, is necessary, what Sykes calls 'an unavoidable task'. The arena of power on which we focus here is a confined one, yet the language of debate within the power-élite of the church demonstrates the usefulness of bearing in mind the tendencies which Sykes suggests. Words like 'diversity', 'unity', 'authority' and 'plurality' all have a loading in the vocabulary of discourse within the church on the question of power.

Secondly, Gabriel suggests, there is a dearth of information about power within the church because in the past it has not been regarded as a profitable object of interest to those concerned with the sociology of power. The discipline of the sociology of the church as it emerged in the 1930's, he suggests, was preoccupied with other problems and subjects:

'The church itself and in particular its power structures and its processes of the formation of power remained outside the field of view of the sociology of religion....in its perspectives and basic principles the early sociology of religion was too bound up with the interests of the (official) church for a sociological look at church structures to have fitted suitably into its scope. More recent sociology of religion regards ecclesiastical phenomena as so unimportant that getting involved with them does not seem very profitable.'(5)

If the power of the church is a diminished commodity, robbing it of interest for sociologists, power within the church is an experienced reality for its constituents, and moreover one which

informs much of its internal debate. It furnishes one of the keys to understanding the inner dynamics of the church's life.

One of those key dynamic elements is the relationship between power and teaching. We saw earlier Andrew Greeley's suggestion that the power of Catholic teaching may be conditioned more by the quality of that teaching, by its inner persuasiveness and the quality of its argument, than by the status of its official authorship.(6) Too simplistic an equation of author and authority would fail to help us understand why documents of impeccable status fail to make any impact, while other less authoritative documents become highly influential. There is nonetheless a vigorous contest within the church over the limits of who can speak for it. The struggle within the contemporary Catholic church over the exercise of the teaching task reveals the continued vitality of that part of the church's life, for the debate is not so much whether the church has a legitimate teaching function but rather how it is to be exercised and by whom. Moreover, in that struggle there is a considerable armoury of sanctions which can be deployed against dissent. Although such sanctions may be felt most keenly by individual theologians, ostensibly powerful bodies such as episcopal conferences can, as we shall see, find themselves challenged over their teaching role.

If it is in the area of what constitutes authoritative teaching that the current debate in the Catholic church lies, that debate asks what is permissible within the framework of the Catholic community, and where the agreed boundary of consent and dissent might lie. It is seen at its most vivid in the tension between the Vatican and the theological community. In the United States this tension has been associated most publicly with the 'faithful dissent' of moral theologian Charles Curran.(7)

Curran's struggles both with the American hierarchy and with Rome have been well-documented. In 1967, the year before the release of Paul VI's encyclical Humanae Vitae, Curran was the focus of a crisis at the Catholic University of America in Washington. In

response to Curran's teaching that the prohibition of artificial contraception was not binding on conscience the board of trustees refused to renew his contract. A student boycott followed, the university closed whereupon the trustees reconsidered their position and granted Curran tenure. In 1983 Curran found himself in conflict with the S.C.D.F., and in the light of his refusal to retract certain of his writings, James Hickey, the Archbishop of Washington and Chancellor of the university, finally removed his mission to teach as a Catholic theologian in 1986. Curran sued the university, unsuccessfully, for violating its contractual relationship with him.

The Curran controversy is by no means an isolated phenomenon, although, in the American context at least, it has a number of individual features. Similar broad issues of the limits of permissible theological freedom have been raised by the disciplinary proceedings against other theologians such as Leonardo Boff(8), Hans Küng (9) and Eduard Schillebeeckx.(10) Eric Hanson suggests that Vatican attacks on the orthodoxy of parts of a national church, in this case its theologians, is one means of bringing its influence to bear, a way of drawing attention to a general concern, for example the papal desire to emphasize what is presented as traditional teaching on abortion, divorce and birth control. (11)

It is the American context of the Curran controversy which has enabled the struggle to be played out so publicly, and this cause célèbre which brings together issues of the legitimacy of public theological dissent from non-infallible teaching and the principle of academic freedom, has become emblematic of a wider concern. Richard McBrien (12) has argued that the primary issue in the Curran affair is nothing less than the nature of the theological enterprise itself, over and above the questions it raises over the role of an individual theologian in the church. He suggests that Rome's move against Curran stems from a misreading of the place of the theologian within the Christian community. Theological endeavour, he writes, is different from other manifestations of the church's teaching vocation, such as

catechesis, preaching and pastoral instruction. Its function is not one of 'echoing' the faith, but of faith seeking understanding. Theology thus has a critical role and is not simply high-level catechesis. If the task of theology is wrongly understood, it impoverishes the whole church. To deny the critical probing role of theology is to diminish the audience it addresses. His line of argument suggests that it is not simply a matter of protesting at the threat to theological enterprise, but of recognizing that there is here a threat to the health of the whole church. The action taken against Curran risks reducing a diverse church culture to one which is monochrome. The imposition of uniformity within the theological community would promote a return to an older teaching model, with the laity's role diminished to that of being a 'simple faithful'.

Attention to the difficulties faced by some of the most creative Catholic theologians demonstrates how quickly the focus of the debate moves from issues of truth to questions of order.

Dissent is seen as synonymous with disobedience, the
 'refusal...to accept the directives of church leadership
 about what is to be taught in the name of the church.'(13)

The theological enterprise runs headlong into a view of the church which is perceived as inimical to creativity and pluralism. It becomes ensnared in a tussle over where power lies within the community of the church as well as raising questions of truth and justice. There are many manifestations of the reason for concern which McBrien expresses: the dominance of the teaching role of the Pope as he sets the agenda for the church, what has been called 'creeping infallibility'(14); the action taken by the curia against individual bishops, seen at its most vivid in the Hunthausen affair(15); the perceived 'centralizing' or 'restorationist' drift within the church.(16) All are indications of a wider debate about the exercise of power, and grow out of differing perceptions of the church's teaching role and style. In short, the nature of the teaching task of the church is inextricably linked with questions of power.

Nor is this simply an internal debate. It has very significant implications for ecumenism, going beyond the question of the proper relationship of the theological enterprise with the Christian community to the issue of the exercise of power over that community by the central organs of the church. If the Curran case alerts us to the debate about the limits of theological freedom and the Hunthausen case reveals the admittedly limited power of Rome over an individual diocesan bishop, then for non-Catholics it is the role of what in shorthand is termed 'Rome' that is the critical feature. Thus, the debate about authority and power is conducted not only within the Catholic church, but also colours the relationship between it and other churches.

When A.R.C.I.C. produced its first Statement on Authority in the church in September 1976 (17) its co-chairmen recognized that the question of authority was 'crucial to the growth in unity' of the two churches. The historical division of the churches had its root in a conflict over authority, and however significant the consensus on other doctrines,

'unresolved questions on the nature and exercise of authority in the church would hinder the growing experience of unity.'(18)

The chairmen made bold declarations of the impact which consensus on the question would bring. Although their immediate focus was on the question of a universal primacy they reflected more widely on the nature of the church:

'Common recognition of Roman primacy would bring changes not only to the Anglican Communion but also to the Roman Catholic Church. On both sides the readiness to learn...would demand humility and charity. The prospect should be met with faith, not fear. Communion with the see of Rome would bring to the churches of the Anglican Communion not only a wider koinonia but also a strengthening of the power to realize its traditional ideal of diversity in unity. Roman Catholics, on their side, would be enriched... the Roman Catholic Church has much to learn from the Anglican synodical tradition of involving the laity in the life and mission of the church. We are convinced, therefore, that our degree of agreement, which argues for greater communion between our churches, can make a profound contribution to the witness of Christianity in our contemporary society.'(19)

The sluggish process of reception of A.R.C.I.C. by the Catholic church (20) may have dampened such hopes, but the ecclesiological implications which it raised suggest areas of interest for a study of how authority is experienced and reflected upon within both communions. It is precisely the shape and power of such primacy as is currently exercised in Rome which sharpens Anglican anxieties. The Report had pointed to the 'possibilities of mutual benefit and reform' that would arise from a shared recognition of one universal primacy, but its authors recognized that, although Anglicanism has never rejected the principle and practice of primacy,

'much Anglican objection has been directed against the manner of the exercise and particular claims of the Roman primacy'
(21)

Here the authors of the report demonstrate one of the key features of Anglican concern about power in the Catholic church, namely the way it is currently exercised by Rome. Acknowledging the keen attention paid by Anglicans to the 'manner of the exercise' of authority makes the study of the Challenge of Peace so fruitful. The features associated with the exercise of power which we see at work in the relationship between Rome and individual theologians are not identical to those reflected in the relationship between Rome and a national hierarchy exercising its teaching vocation. If the former introduces the categories of dissent and creative exploration of the faith, the latter brings into sharp focus the interplay between unity and diversity as the Catholic community responds to the issue of nuclear war in a variety of ways. Nevertheless, the framing of this teaching document and its exposure to those organs within the church whose explicit task is the promotion of teaching allows us insight into how authority operates in fact within the church, how tensions are borne and consensus is built.

In what follows it is suggested that there are three ways in which studying The Challenge of Peace helps us see how power operates within the church as it develops its teaching mission.

In asking 'Who teaches in the church?', we address one of the features which mark the preparation of the Peace Pastoral as innovative, the recognition that the process of teaching, even teaching by as authoritative a source as an episcopal conference, requires a response both of listening and learning. The lasting significance of the Pastoral resides in that process. That process of open reflection is integral to the document's character, and is not simply subsumed in the final shape the teaching instrument takes. It allows us to see that there is a further dimension to the debate about the teaching office of the church than those traditional Anglican concerns which centre on the narrow question of the distinctive role of the Pope, and indeed on the even narrower question of papal infallibility. It raises a broader and more radical question, the role of the people of God in the formation of teaching for the church and for the world. How is a community of conscience to be formed, and what are the formative agents?

Secondly, in asking 'How much diversity is tolerable?' we come to the heart of the Anglican struggle with the problem of how best to integrate independent provinces with distinctive traditions and patterns of life into one communion. The model of integration offered by the Catholic church is regarded variously with anxiety or longing. A critical issue for both communions is the assessment of how much pluralism is possible within a selfconsciously united church. In the present case, what is the beneficial or destructive impact of the fact that different Catholic hierarchies have issued statements on the question of nuclear war, with markedly differing tones and approaches? The American hierarchy is not the only one to address these questions. Does the resulting diversity have a strengthening or weakening effect on the church's teaching vocation? How polychrome can that community of conscience which is the church be?

Thirdly, the production of the American Pastoral offers us a unique insight into the operation of power within the power élite itself by way of the Consultation in Rome between the American

bishops, representatives of major European hierarchies and the Curia. It allows us to see how relations between the Vatican and a major, powerful hierarchy are managed, for it is the role of Cardinal Ratzinger and other representatives of the Curia which emerges from the Schotte memorandum of the meeting as the most significant, with their challenge not only to the detail of the draft Pastoral but to its methodology and very status.

In the questions raised in Rome about the valid teaching role of national hierarchies, broad ecclesial themes are disclosed. To Anglican ears the judgement made in the Consultation that a national hierarchy has no 'mandatum docendi' alerts us to the dangers which this poses for the cherished Anglican tradition of the independence of national provinces. If the initiating of teaching by national hierarchies is to be challenged, and moreover teaching which seeks to marry a pastoral response to the needs of its culture with a recognition of the place of such teaching in the wider framework of the universal church, is it possible to have a sanguine view of a future marked by the diversity in unity which the A.R.C.I.C. theologians sought to promote? The independence of national provinces which is a founding element in the Anglican communion is regarded not only as promoting plurality of voice within the church, but also as according proper value to the national, even local, contexts. At heart it is part of how the dialogue between 'catholicity' and 'unity' might be resolved. In the future progress of this dialogue lies the possibility of what it may mean for the universal church to act as a contributor to the creation of many communities of conscience, in the pursuit of which theological exploration and ecclesial diversity are regarded as virtues.

WHO TEACHES IN THE CHURCH?

A NEW MODEL: TEACHING WITH AUTHORITY

The Bishop as Listener

In a lecture delivered in St James' Cathedral, Brooklyn in 1981 Bishop James Malone, an influential member of the US hierarchy, addressed himself to the task of defining the role of a bishop.(22) In doing so he adopted a phrase used in a document published by Pro Mundi Vita, that the emphasis in a bishop's ministry should be on 'listening and serving'. Malone develops the impact made by listening as an integral part of the bishop's teaching office and defends its legitimacy as a way of describing the episcopal vocation by making appeal to the Second Vatican Council, arguing that it is grounded in the Council's ecclesiology. The notion of the 'listening' church, it might be observed, is part of a lexicon of true conciliar practice and hostile to what is perceived as the practice of the preconciliar pyramidal church with its easy stress on unilateral, even univocal teaching. In this latter model of the teaching vocation of the church there is an implied division into the 'teaching' church and the church that is taught, the *ecclesia docens* and the *ecclesia discens*. Moreover, the church that is taught was called upon to listen, learn and obey. Malone celebrates the departure from this older understanding and goes on to develop the significance of listening as an integral part of the teaching church's vocation.

Listening, he argues, involves attentiveness to a whole range of voices: to that of the Pope and the experience of brother-bishops; to past tradition; to theologians, a dialogue which 'continues to heat up the church kitchen in our time'; to the people whom he serves, and to the questions set by the wider world. The listening bishop then moves into dialogue. He must be free to contribute to the dialogue, for it is 'in the exchange of ideas, in listening and responding, that he can be most effective as a teacher'.(23)

In this characterization of the listening vocation of the bishop,

most of the voices Malone lists are predictable sources. It would be surprising if the voice of the central magisterium of the church, particularly as this is expressed by the Pope, were not affirmed by a bishop as a chief source in his teaching task. Of greater interest is what Malone suggests about the interplay between bishop and theologian, and the place of the bishop within the wider community of faith.

'In today's church, I affirm that a bishop is part of God's pilgrim people, rather than apart from them. The bishop plays a central role in their achievement of *communio*, but he himself achieves it better both by listening and by receptive interaction with his people. Without that, the bishop has no part with them and there is no church. On the other hand, without him and his teaching there is no point at which or for which to gather.' (24)

I have chosen to give prominence to these reflections of Bishop Malone not because of their originality, but because the context in which they were delivered, one of a series of public lectures, suggests that they may be common currency among the bishops, and because they open the question of who in the church is teacher and who is taught. The context in which he spoke may indicate to us that he is giving expression to a widely-held view of the bishop's teaching task, one that approximates to a conventional wisdom. The approach he sketches, moreover, seems to have very close parallels to the image of teaching which the N.C.C.B. employed in setting up its committee on the nuclear question, and which was developed by the committee as it set about its task. Although Malone is primarily interested in the teaching role of an individual bishop, the characteristics he lists lead to the wider question of whether they can also be true of the wider church, of episcopal conferences, even of the papal teaching office itself? Is the 'listening' church simply a rhetorical device or does it reveal the future pattern for the church's teaching ministry?

Malone returned to that question some eight years later, when the experience of the drafting of the Peace Pastoral had been augmented by the preparation of the Pastoral letter on the economy.

In a wide-ranging overview of the life of the American hierarchy as part of its bicentennial celebrations he highlighted the listening process adopted by the American bishops as a gift to the whole church:

'...it is appropriate to highlight what I think has been one of the major contributions we have made to other episcopal conferences and to the Holy See - our methodology. It's our process as much as our product which makes us unique. In developing our national catechetical directory and the major pastoral letters...we did something not often done in church circles: we opened up the drafting process to the scrutiny and involvement of others...our process used a 'drafting committee' which first listened, studied and consulted before putting pen to paper (or...fingers to laptop computer)...this method is becoming so routine for us that we might tend to overlook the radical nature of this process. Some ecclesiastical types are fearful that this methodology places the teaching office of the bishop in some jeopardy...Bishops need help!...we can't get that input if we produce documents in secrecy. Nor can it be done without a certain 'gestation period' which provides the atmosphere for a position to grow and develop. We have drafted some of our major documents in this rather unique fashion. Other conferences - Australia, Great Britain - have asked to study our procedures, and they are considering ways to adapt them to their own culture and praxis.'(25)

The years between Malone's two statements had not been easy ones for advocates of this view of the church's task. The American bishops had found themselves invited to the 'informal consultation' in Rome in January 1983 at a critical point in the drafting of the Peace Pastoral, and there encountered hostility to the process they had adopted, and indeed to the very task of creating a community of conscience. The other hierarchies present at that meeting had shown little inclination to listen to and learn from the American enterprise. It was not only the American hierarchy which found itself in trouble. In the course of the 1985 Synod of Bishops the role and purpose of all episcopal conferences was questioned, and one of the products of the Synod was the proposed draft on this question by the relevant Vatican dicastery. The place of the episcopal conference in the shape of the church became one of the most commonly addressed ecclesiological questions. It is in that context that Malone's remarks must be seen, and where The Challenge of Peace uncovers some of the most lively debate within the Catholic church on the

question of teaching, authority and power, and the meaning of collegiality itself. Most of our attention in this debate focuses on centres of power within the church, and variant views among the power-elite of how that power is properly exercised. Before we look at that in detail it may be worth sketching the broader question of how teaching engages the whole community of faith, not only in the reception of teaching but in its development and articulation. This question is the cause of considerable attention within the theological community.

LISTENING IN A COMMUNITY OF DISCOURSE:

Bishop, Theologian and the People of God

'As I have often liked to put it, the theologian and the exegete need the magisterium and the faithful to buzz about them like gadflies to make them reflect on 'their dedication to intellectual honesty' and 'responsible scholarship'. But the magisterium and the faithful also need the theologians and the exegetes to buzz about them like gadflies to make them reflect on their need of 'constant updating' and respect for 'the deepest and noblest aspiration of the human spirit'. This is the role of mutual stimulation.'(26)

Joseph Fitzmyer's picture was, doubtless, intended to affirm the respective teaching role of the theologian and the 'magisterium' as it operates at various levels. It conceals, however, a view of the limitedness of the theologians' task. It implies that the real and effective locus of the church's teaching task is the bishop, or the bishops gathered around the Pope. The function of the rest of the community of faith is one of stimulation and challenge rather than of initiation and formulation. Is this, in the end, all that Malone's image of the 'listening' bishop promotes, the enabling of the bishop to be better informed and more rigorous in the articulation of teaching? Does it indicate the unsurprising conclusion that good research among the theological community and good market-research among the faithful will lead to a more finely tuned teaching which has more potential to win the respect and obedience of the church? Even this limited listening would move beyond the tried and tested methodology employed by most of the church's teaching agents in the preparation or promotion of teaching, but it falls short of that engagement of the whole people of God in the teaching process which radical voices seek to encourage.

In a pungent editorial in the Dominican journal, *New Blackfriars*, John Orme Mills attacked what he called the 'new monolithism' in the church.(27) In a stark view of how power is currently exercised he writes:

'consciously or unconsciously, the church is increasingly modelling itself on the modern state, and excessive proximity

of central government is one of the features of advanced industrial societies. We are witnessing a steady undermining of the principle of subsidiarity. Thirty years ago it was taken for granted that there was a great variety of theological opinions. During the past two decades the old toolkit of differentiations has disappeared and not been replaced, and this has been happening at the same time as integrist and voluntarist assumptions have been gaining an even stronger hold in the church's government.'

Orme Mills' attack is twofold: not only can the new authoritarianism which he sees as animating the life of the church not be justified by appeal to authentic Catholic tradition, it represents a betrayal of that tradition by falling victim to the impact of secular realities. Even if the teaching agents of the church commit themselves to listen, the contraction of allowable diversity within the theological community implies that the voices listened to will be progressively more monochrome.

A similar line of argument, or polemic, is advanced by Orme Mills' fellow Dominican Edmund Hill.(28) Hill's ecclesiological thesis suggests that there is a polarity in the post-conciliar church between 'monarchical papalists' and 'ministerial collegialists', a polarity which reflects different perceptions of the nature of the church and its task. This affects the teaching church in a number of ways. At the heart of the ecclesiological debate lie differing understandings of what 'teaching' is.

Hill draws a distinction between 'judging' and 'teaching', arguing that current use of the term 'magisterium' muddies the waters. He argues that there is a need to distinguish

'the simple act of making a judgment, of deciding and declaring whether a doctrine, an opinion, is true or false, [from] the highly complex activity of teaching, which involves all sorts of vital subsidiary acts like research, enquiry, argument, discussion, learning, wondering, making and withdrawing and qualifying tentative judgments, as well as useful acts of what one might call lubrication (not readily observable in papal encyclicals or episcopal pastorals) such as entertaining, shocking, stimulating, amusing, cajoling, encouraging and illuminating those taught.'(29)

It would be rash to characterize The Challenge of Peace as an entertaining document, yet some of the qualities Hill describes are indeed to be found there while the process which led to the issuing of the Pastoral saw many of these virtues displayed. If, in the offering of the Pastoral to the church and to the world, the bishops sought to stimulate wide public debate, to offer by the example of their own process a pattern of enquiry and investigation from a wide diversity of sources, to acknowledge different levels of authority within the document itself, and perhaps most importantly, to risk the making of specific prudential judgments about nuclear strategy, we can see embodied the possibilities which Hill holds out to the church as a learning community.

The categories Hill uses are employed by Nicholas Lash in a subtly argued article, intriguingly titled 'The Difficulty of Making Sense'.⁽³⁰⁾ Lash reflects upon the unhealthy confusion which arises from mixing what he calls the judicial and pedagogic categories, the judging and teaching tasks. He argues that good teaching by the church requires a whole-hearted commitment to the process as well as to the product. Lash is highly critical of the view that teaching to be authoritative must be the product of discreet, even hidden, reflection, and must carry a unanimity of voice. Advocates of the need for unanimity and of a concealed process regard open reflection, wide debate with the attendant possibility of challenge and dissent, with distrust. Such characteristics can be seen not only as inessential to the formulation of good teaching but divisive and damaging to the integrity of the teaching, and presumably to the prestige of the teaching agent. It is this view which pervades the teaching of the contemporary church. It expresses itself in curious ways, not least by tinging all the teaching of the church with the method and character of papal teaching. Is it really necessary or desirable, he asks, for teaching documents which do not share the status of a papal encyclical to share the hidden genesis which encyclicals have?

The argument which is advanced by these theologians turns on two key areas.

First, the teaching task of the church operates at a variety of different levels and performs a variety of tasks for the community of faith. Invoking the principle of subsidiarity and an established custom which is being eroded by current practice, they plead for a greater flexibility in the way the church teaches. The fruit of that flexibility is squandered by a pervasive creeping infallibility which accords all agents and instruments of teaching the colour of papal pronouncement. This when accompanied by an increase in central, curial control has the effect of flattening the landscape of teaching within the church. Far from raising the profile of the church's teaching it diminishes it and inhibits the emergence of a genuinely pastoral magisterium.

Secondly, the exploration which must accompany the preparation of a teaching instrument is not only helpful to the elaboration of good teaching, although it will promote that. The exploration is not simply the necessary journey to be undertaken in the search for the most appropriate teaching document. It is in itself a teaching and learning experience. Both the process by which an instrument of teaching is prepared, and the use to which it is put, belong within the overall teaching and learning task. Here we see the cause of that great nervousness which was expressed in the Rome Consultation, namely that the Pastoral might be used as one contribution among many in a public debate:

'it is wrong to propose the teaching of the Bishops merely as a basis for debate: the teaching ministry of the Bishops means that they lead the people of God and their teaching should not be obscured or reduced to one element among many in a free debate.' (31)

Such a view proceeds from a desire that debate should precede the offering of a teaching document to the church, rather than be stimulated by it.

Moreover, the debate out of which the document emerges should be veiled: indeed, the Schotte memorandum seems to suggest that

there is no room for debate at all, as
 'substantial consensus must be based on doctrine and does not
 flow from debate.'(32)

An example of the way in which the church is deprived of any teaching worth the name because of such inhibitions is offered by Lash. In 1988 the English Catholic hierarchy issued a lengthy statement entitled Opportunities for Peace.(33) It recommended that all Catholics pray for peace, and offered a summary of previous statements and current concerns.

The statement itself was unexceptionable and dull. The Bishops reminded their audience that in 1980 the Conference had indicated that it was not in a position to give a 'full and authoritative judgment on all aspects of the morality of the nuclear deterrent' while inviting men and women of good will to inform their consciences in order to contribute to the clarification of the moral issues.

Eight years of reflection by the English Catholic community had, it would seem, not greatly aided the bishops in their making of a judgment. The Tablet revealed in its Notebook that
 'it is fairly well known that Cardinal Hume called together a high-powered commission of prominent Catholics....such were the divisions of opinion that no-one could reconcile them'.(34)

The contrast with the method employed by the American bishops could hardly be more marked. The point here is not simply that the Bernardin committee followed a different drafting path, but that the process which it followed, accompanied by extensive coverage of that process, disclosed a different understanding to that embedded in the English bishops' statement that no teaching other than final and univocal teaching is possible. It is this stress on unanimity and integrity that characterizes the Schotte memorandum of the Rome Consultation. These twin virtues were to characterize the life of an individual hierarchy and the relation between hierarchies. Yet the very process which the American bishops followed, and which is now in Bishop Malone's judgement part of their gift to the church, with its commitment to the

building of consensus, did more to promote a real unanimity of voice than the silence of the English hierarchy. Moreover, part of that consensus-building was promoted by the presence of members of diverse hierarchies at the Rome Consultation. Whether that was the intention is another matter.

BUILDING THE CATHEDRAL:

How much diversity is permissible?

In one of his most celebrated images of the peace-making task of the church Pope John Paul II compared it to the building of a cathedral:

'like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith.'(35)

The Pope's words had a particular poignancy as they were delivered at Coventry where the two cathedrals stand as a visible reminder of the destructive impact of conventional warfare and of the hope for peace. By pointing to the two buildings, the Pope seemed to suggest that each in its different way was the product of faith, of patience and of vision. It was an apt image in the context of the city of Coventry. It also suggests a slightly more disturbing question. If the cathedral of peace was to be built slowly and patiently, how far was the church willing to see the building take shape in a variety of different styles after the fashion of the mediaeval cathedrals? Would the rich diversity of different elements, each the product of different visions of peace as these were located in different contexts, be allowed free expression as the 'cathedral of peace' took shape, or was there to be a master-builder keeping a wary eye on the project, and assuring architectural consistency? That there are different visions of peace, or rather ways to peace, is self-evident. That different visions of peace-making and the policies which promoted peace were held by different constituencies within the church is also self-evident. Could there also be a diversity of approaches advanced by the teaching organs of the church as the whole Catholic community sought to bring its heritage of reflection and the lived experience of its people to bear on the project? If the answer to this was negative, how was the church to respond to the Pope's call for the church

'to form people capable of being true artisans of peace in the places where they live'?(36)

The Building Blocks Appear

Throughout the year which saw the final drafting of The Challenge of Peace episcopal conferences throughout the industrialized world addressed the issues of war and peace in pastoral letters. Widely varied in form and approach, their production bore witness to the shared concern of the bishops of the church that war and peace problems should be addressed by the teaching agents of the church. To understand the debate as to how much diversity could be tolerated within the 'cathedral of peace', and to see the innovative character of the American Pastoral we need to set out the context established by this wide range of contributions by the bishops' conferences.

The initiative in 1983 was taken by the Berlin Bishops' Conference, the organizational forum of the bishops of the German Democratic Republic, which issued a statement on January 1st.(37) There followed statements by the Hungarian (38) and Austrian (39) hierarchies, the latter taking the form of an appeal for peace and issued in April. More substantial letters followed, principally Gerechtigkeit schafft Frieden (Out of Justice, Peace) (40) issued by the West German hierarchy on April 27th, the final draft of the American letter, and Peace and Justice(41), a letter on nuclear arms by the Dutch bishops. In July the Japanese bishops published The Desire for Peace: the Gospel Mission of the Japanese Catholic Church(42), and it in turn was followed by statements by the Belgian bishops (43) and a joint statement by the Irish bishops, The Storm that Threatens(44). Finally in November the French hierarchy made another substantial contribution entitled Gagner la Paix (perhaps ambiguously either 'Winning the Peace' or 'Achieving Peace').(45)

A shared sense of the need to address the nuclear question lay behind this wave of teaching initiatives. Whether the American Pastoral stimulated other hierarchies into action, or whether political realities in each country demanded it, the shape which the resulting letters took was far from monochrome. The range of letters, statements and declarations demonstrates a wide

variety of approach, of language and ambition. Some are little more than exhortations to work for peace, others, in particular the West German Gerechtigkeit schafft Frieden, were substantial and theologically dense. Despite this wide range, the fact that so many hierarchies felt the need to speak on the issue of nuclear war, often taking as a starting-point the nuclear arms race, tells its own story. The chronology of the bishops' initiatives may not reveal a domino effect within the church, although in this regard the Rome Consultation in January 1983 offers a tantalizing genesis. It does reveal, however, the phenomenon of Catholic hierarchies in the industrialized and therefore militarized West taking pastoral teaching initiatives in this one area. How marked was the diversity of approach? For as we reflect on the Vatican's attitude to the American Pastoral it is wise to remember that Rome was reacting not only to the specific shape of The Challenge of Peace, but to it in the context of this wide-ranging episcopal initiative.

It is not possible in this context to carry out a comparative analysis of the different episcopal statements. The intention is much more modest. It is to suggest that there is a diversity of voice among the bishops of the Catholic church, although one which is expressed within fairly prescribed limits. This diversity is not as great as that which obtains within the church as a whole. The bishops may speak of the pacifist witness, for example, but are far from espousing it. When we consider the nervousness with which the central organs of the church view diverse voices within the world-wide episcopate, we may be surprised at how narrow the area of such diversity is.

A nuanced diversity in the hierarchies' conclusions on specific matters such as deterrence is only part of the diversity which we should be attentive to. To lay the documents alongside one another reveals only one aspect of this. There is not only a diversity of conclusion. There are also diversities of originality, of style and language. There are diversities of audience. There are diversities of geopolitical context, and of ecclesial context. There is diversity in the way in which the

bishops developed their teaching, and in their hopes for what it would accomplish. While there may be interesting variations in the way in which the bishops address the question of deterrence, for example, it may be more surprising that, given the diverse 'place' of the Catholic church in different cultures, those variations were not greater. When Francis Winters draws attention to the diversity of approach by the bishops of the Atlantic Alliance (46) the most telling feature is the relationship which the bishops' teaching established with the political culture out of which the teaching came and to which it was addressed. It was the geopolitical importance of Germany, France and the United States which made the way the hierarchies within those nations tackled the questions of war and peace so significant. The intrinsic interest of the statements of other hierarchies, say of Scotland, is correspondingly masked.(47)

If we are to be attentive to diversity, it is important simply to note the need to locate all the statements in their context as well as to examine their content.

It is clear, for example, that those episcopal conferences which operate in Eastern Europe, notably the Hungarian and East German, have similarities of experience which mark them out from others. Both represent churches which have little experience of reflecting publicly on these questions, and the East German bishops distanced themselves explicitly from any attempt to develop a political concept of peace. To understand this is a matter of attending not only to the broad context of church-state relations, but also to the effect of the existence of Peace councils in both countries which enjoy very close ties to government. In places where the church has had little apparent political leverage, the simple fact that the bishops address the question openly is its main interest, even if the arguments brought forward are not ground-breaking in the context of the wider church. Similarly, those conferences which operate within cultures with a strong rooted Catholicism, such as the Irish, the Belgian and the Austrian might be set alongside one another.

A further argument for a contextual grouping of statements could be based on the fact that the geopolitical realities of a divided Europe, and the dominance of France and Germany in continental affairs, make the statements of those hierarchies particularly significant. If it is the courage displayed by the Eastern European hierarchies in addressing the question at all which impresses the observer, then the comparative silence of hierarchies in strategically important nations is curious. If the contribution of the Eastern European bishops is not primarily that of opening up new areas of the debate, and in the main the two statements we referred to do not, their importance, beyond the simple fact of tackling the question, lies in the specific references they make to their own culture. The Berlin statement, for example, refers to conscientious objection, an option open to its citizens in a way not paralleled in other Warsaw Pact countries, and to military education in schools. It is the courage to tackle specific public questions in an independent fashion which gives these statements their interest. If this is true for those parts of the church moving carefully to create space in a hostile or indifferent culture, then might it not also be true for the church in places where it can more confidently speak to society? If the specificity of the teaching is commendable in East Germany, should there not be a similar approbation of specificity in the teaching of The Challenge of Peace and disappointment at the lack of such an approach by, say, the hierarchy of England and Wales? The West German statement is one of the most important in its doctrinal presentation of the nature of peace, yet there is frustratingly little reference to the peculiar features of West Germany itself, and in particular, the bishops avoided matters of great national import such as the deployment of intermediate nuclear missiles on German soil. The relationship between the differing contexts in which the church lives out its life and the specificity with which the bishops reflect on that context thus provides some surprising results.

If it is the context which gives the East German statement its interest, then it is the content of the West German statement, and to a lesser extent the French statement which mark them out.

It is worth sketching some of their main features in the light of the prominent role these hierarchies played in the Rome Consultation.

Gerechtigkeit schafft Frieden was published in April 1983, and matches the American pastoral in length. Critics of the American Pastoral like James Schall have praised the West German letter for its theologically rigorous approach.⁽⁴⁸⁾ Of all the comparable statements by a bishops' conference this provides the most cogent presentation of the nature of peace, the need for it, its biblical foundation, and the course of reflection upon it by the church at different points in history. One of the criticisms which Weigel made of the American Pastoral is that it was focused on war and war-fighting strategies rather than on peace as *tranquillitas ordinis*. Here the West German bishops would win his approval. As they approach the contemporary debate within the church, the bishops identify the shift in emphasis from the idea of just defence to the promotion of the mandate for peace. The doctrine of just defence has not been abandoned, but it is insufficient to 'serve as a basis for an overall concept of the ecclesiastical ethics of peace.' The bishops suggest the need to balance the promotion of the positive precepts of peace with the equally weighty need to combat the causes of war. Their approach to security policy is framed within this dialogue:

'on the one hand, politicians cannot cast aside responsibility for the protection of fundamental legal rights within their political system. Where the provision of defence measures is necessary, they must take the necessary steps. On the other hand, such a 'defensive' maintenance of peace is not enough. A policy of promoting peace must proceed from the assumption that peaceful relations between nations will be based less and less on weapons and the mechanisms of threats and more and more on the respect of everybody's rights and the recognition of human well-being in freedom and justice.'⁽⁴⁹⁾

These twin perspectives are then applied to the nuclear deterrent, and the bishops starting from the papal judgment on the limited moral acceptability of the deterrent proceed to offer orienting perspectives on the deterrent.

The goal of the deterrent, they remind their audience, is the prevention of war, and this means that policy makers and military leaders must be able to

'substantiate the fact that war can really be prevented by this strategy and why'.(50)

Secondly, and consequent upon the clarity of this goal, the question of means arises:

'any assessment of nuclear strategies and nuclear armaments which sees them in isolation from this political objective would necessarily require a radical condemnation'.(51)

This indicates that weapons must be judged not in isolation but in the context of the overall political goal.

Having established these perspectives the bishops then offer three criteria for judging the deterrent. Existing or proposed military means must not render war more feasible or probable. This first criterion creates great difficulties, they suggest, for effective deterrence is contingent upon credible threat. Secondly, they reject any search for superiority. Thirdly, all military means must be compatible with effective mutual arms limitation, reduction and disarmament.

These are the criteria which, the bishops argue, must be used in the task of living between the poles, the horror of mass destruction on one hand, and the threat of totalitarian injustice on the other. This interpolar space encourages the acceptance of the deterrent for an interim period:

'by virtue of this decision we are choosing from among various evils the one which, as far as is humanly possible to tell, appears as the lesser'.(52)

In an outline of the argument in the West German letter (53) Richard McCormick identifies the key element in the bishops' presentation as the choice of the lesser evil when all the options involve evil. What the bishops do not reflect, he suggests, is a proper awareness of the fact that the evils may be qualitatively different. He accepts that the rejection of the nuclear deterrent does involve the risk of vulnerability to totalitarian blackmail and expansionism and this is clearly no good thing. Yet, in moral terms, the suffering of such things would not involve the victim in committing moral evil. This

could be the result of the other, of tolerating a nuclear deterrent if this implied the risk of its use.

'The document seems to be balancing two sources of danger, two nonmoral outcomes.' (54)

On the question of whether it is right to maintain a limited and morally legitimate use of nuclear weapons the German bishops seem to take refuge in a measure of ambiguity, much as the Americans do. Reflecting on the concern many people share that escalation is inevitable, they ask,

'Is not the danger of escalation from their use - however limited - so great that one cannot imagine any situation in which one could accept responsibility after consideration of all factors to use nuclear weapons?' (55)

The question is left unanswered.

It was in November 1983 that the French hierarchy released their pastoral, Gagner la Paix. Like the West German document the French initiative emerges from a context close to the heart of the East-West conflict in the Northern hemisphere. Its approach lies close to that of the West German letter, but it employs a sharper tone, and judges that deterrence has a prior claim over the urgent need for disarmament. The bishops denounce unilateral disarmament and defend deterrence on the basis of the perceived 'aggressive character' of Marxist-Leninist ideology. Thus, for the French, the central question is whether it is possible for a country 'whose life, freedom and identity is menaced' to parry the threat with an effective, even nuclear counter-threat. Unequivocal condemnation of war would expose all peaceful people to those bent upon domination. The deterrent is then the most effective barrier between war and blackmail:

'To escape war...peoples risk succumbing to other forms of violence and injustice: colonization, alienation, removal of their freedom and their identity. In an extreme sense, peace at any price leads a nation to every variety of surrender. Unilateral disarmament can even provoke aggressiveness in neighbours nourishing the temptation to seize too easy a prey.' (56)

The defence of the legitimacy of deterrence nevertheless includes conditions. It must relate only to defence, must not lead to over-armament, and must be accompanied by a constructive peace policy. As far as use is concerned it would seem that the French support a mere-possession approach.

This brief sketch of some of the main features of the French and German pastorals is designed to suggest where the parameters of the diversity which is a perceived feature of the Catholic bishops' teaching on nuclear war lie. If the approach is kaleidoscopic as Francis Winters judges it to be, the colour range for the shifting patterns is very restricted. The question is not so much where the points of difference lie, but what the sheer energy which so many episcopal conferences have given to this task tells us of the way in which diverse approaches, diverse building-blocks, can be built into a coherent if not uniform structure.

There is a common starting-point in the value accorded the Catholic tradition, and in particular to papal teaching. Fundamental conceptions of peace and the duties of peace-making are common to all. These are reflected in the language of the Kingdom, the link between peace and justice, the vocation to educate and work for peace while at the same time acknowledging that it is a gift from God, all these are elements to be found in the texts. In the myriad papal texts which might have been used it is the speech of Pope John Paul II to the UN Special session on Disarmament in June 1982 which is the most often referred to. No Conference has advocated unilateral disarmament, none has unequivocally rejected deterrence. The shades of acceptability accorded to deterrence may vary in hue. The French emphasize that it is morally acceptable; the Americans stress its provisionality in the search for progressive disarmament. It might seem that the diversity is subtly expressed.

There are, however, strong regional or contextual flavours to the bishops' teaching. The West German care for the protection of fundamental freedoms and righteousness; the French

characterization of the context set by the threat of war and blackmail; the East Germans' specific concern with conscientious objection or their opposition to military education at school; the Dutch and Belgian plea for mutual and reciprocal disarmament; the Japanese awareness of the threat to peace implicit in the North-South divide: in each case the focus of the teaching initiative is related to its context to a greater or lesser extent, and the diversity of those contexts produces a diversity of priorities and approaches, even within the overarching context of a Catholic address.

Such diversity is not simply a reflection of the way in which each hierarchy reflects the society in which it ministers. In the key question of deterrence there are substantive differences between the hierarchies, even when they commonly refer to the recognized authority of the papal position. In the end, it is the sophistication of the American understanding of strategic and technological reality which marks out their approach as distinctive. If the French, for example, continue to focus on counter-city targetting, the American Pastoral recognizes that the impact of increased numbers of yet more sophisticated weaponry has been to move the debate to the possibility of counter-force targetting, and therefore to questions of winnable, limited nuclear war. The argument that the character of the deterrent has changed, fostering a more unstable climate as the greater numbers of weapons needed to pose a counterforce threat introduces the destabilizing factor of a pre-emptive strike, is what gives the American document a strategic bite unmatched by other hierarchies. It is in the detail that the character of the American document emerges, with its more detailed address to questions of arms control and arms sales. Most radical of all, the American Pastoral condemns 'first use', thus challenging NATO policy, while the French, who are not military members of NATO, do not.

Overall in this vexed area of deterrence it is helpful to see the contributions of the hierarchies not so much as competing positions which must be judged against one another, but as part

of the process within the church of working towards a 'Catholic' position. That will not be defined by the extraction of a lowest common denominator from within the existing statements, nor, I would suggest, by waiting for a more detailed judgement by the papal teaching office. It would be surprising if the bishops of the church could arrive at a coherent, persuasive, detailed position on the question when it is the subject of a great divergence of approach within the theological community. It would seem that it is not, for the moment at least, a topic as fraught with Vatican censures and anathemas as that of sexual ethics. However provisional, the American bishops' endeavour suggests that the mix of listening to the strategists, reflecting with the theologians and addressing the public in a language which can be understood, might show the way forward not only on this question, but on others too sensitive at this point to tackle.

TEACHING AS EXPLORATION

Before we turn to the contribution of the Rome Consultation in January 1983 to this debate, let us set The Challenge of Peace in the context which Malone sketches, that of a church committed to listening. The section on the Process has described the methodology which the Bernardin committee employed, and gave some sense of the contribution made by a variety of agencies both within and outwith the Church. It sought to show how the ad hoc committee sought to build consensus, first within the committee itself, and then within the N.C.C.B. As we suggested earlier the most modest reading of that process would suggest the prudence and effectiveness of wide consultation as a means of building support for the final outcome. Although the process might not go as far as Orme Mills and Hill might demand, it was more than simply instrumental. In two respects it demonstrated possibilities, not only for pastoral letters, but also for other teaching instruments. These may be characterized as the 'exploratory' and the 'responsive', both of which move the consultative process beyond the simple demands of consensus-building. Thus James Malone:

'I believe this particular methodology did more to teach our Catholic people and to interject our voice in the American public debate than would have happened if we had simply published a final version. Ours became a five-year project rather than a five-minute news story. People read, discussed, debated. Bishops taught; people learned; even bishops learned. That's good.'(57)

The Pastoral's 'Responsive' Character

In what way can teaching be responsive? Here we will highlight only those elements within the text which make this clear. Responsiveness was built into both the genesis and the development of the Pastoral. What signs of this are there within the substance of the text?

At the outset, the bishops speak of the reason for their reflection on the question of nuclear war and peace. They describe themselves as

'pastors ministering in one of the major nuclear nations [who] have encountered this terror in the hearts and minds of our people...indeed we share it'(58)

The bishops see their teaching growing out of the concrete apprehension of the 'supreme crisis' posed by modern warfare. The genesis of the letter lies within the pastoral experience of the bishops as 'spiritual shepherds'. If the Vatican Council had identified the moment of supreme crisis some two decades before, it is the lived experience of ministering within the Catholic community which prompts the teaching initiative. In this respect the original title of the draft letter mirrors its origins: 'God's hope in a time of fear.' It was the desire to respond to the fear felt by citizens in the face of the nuclear threat which spurred the bishops into action.

Having committed themselves to the task, the Bernardin committee's work led it to consult extensively with members of the U.S. administration and the U.S. academic community. The list of those consulted indicates both the range of those involved and their diversity. In a public lecture, Bishop John Cummins of Oakland reminded his hearers of the importance of listening to a broad spectrum of opinion:

'we can expect...that bishops will be drawing more and more on theologians for the writing of pastoral letters, for analyzing the American scene, and for synthesizing the dialogue between US theologians and Latin American liberation theologians....I believe, too, that we bishops will be wise enough to consult not just those theologians with whom we are intellectually comfortable, but even a wider group so that we

will have the sense of the broader reflection and experience of the community.'(59)

In this the committee only mirrored the extraordinary energy within the Church on this question. Castelli lists the wide-ranging nature of the discussion at diocesan level which the Pastoral's preparation both responded to and focused.(60)

The listening task committed the bishops to attend to the diversity of voice within the Catholic community in general. This is acknowledged in # 12. After citing a passage from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church, the bishops acknowledge that

'on some complex social questions, the Church expects a diversity of views even though all hold the same moral principles. The experience of preparing this pastoral letter has shown us the range of strongly held opinion in the Catholic community on questions of war and peace. Obviously, as bishops we believe that such differences should be expressed within the framework of Catholic moral teaching. We urge mutual respect among different groups in the Church as they analyze this letter and the issues it addresses. Not only conviction and commitment are needed in the Church, but also civility and charity.'

The Pastoral's 'Exploratory' Character

This characteristic is an important corollary to the Pastoral's responsive nature. Too rigid an understanding of a responsive model might suggest that the bishops were inhibited from an initiating role, and had become restricted to articulating only those commonly held attitudes within the community which would gain maximum consent. That would scarcely qualify as teaching at all, and this kind of concern was voiced at the Rome Consultation.(61) It is an unjust accusation: the bishops face and vividly describe the current 'climate of fear' and in order to respond to it first master the detail of nuclear technology and strategy, then set about developing specific theological responses and practical judgements. They do not rest content with the repetition of unarguable secular platitudes, political

lowest common denominators. Their approach is properly described as 'exploratory'.

The bishops saw elements within the Pastoral as a self-conscious development of Catholic teaching. The bishops were not content simply to restate the public position of the Pope or the Council, although that was suggested to them. In #7 they speak of the 'long and complex' tradition on war and peace, stretching from the Sermon on the Mount to the statements of Pope John Paul II and then clarify their intention to 'locate ourselves in this tradition, seeking to draw from it and to develop it'. In this task the Pastoral Constitution acts as both inspiration and guide. The task of developing the tradition, a task we may see in this context as an exploratory one, is closely linked to the pastoral locus of the bishops' task. Thus, in #64 they write:

'we draw heavily upon the popes of the nuclear age... the teaching of popes and councils must be incarnated by each local church in a manner understandable to its culture. This allows each local church to bring its unique insights to bear on the issues shaping our world... In this letter we wish to continue and develop the teaching on peace and war which we have previously made, and which reflects both the teaching of the universal church and the insights and experience of the Catholic community of the US.'

I noted above that this commitment to interpretation and development was self-conscious. This is made clear by comparing this final version of the paragraph with what had appeared in the third draft. There the bishops wrote:

'we make our own their [i.e. papal] teaching and that of the council, while in consonance with such teaching we add observations born of the experience in the US'.

We see here a shift from a position in which the bishops are content to re-present existing teaching to one which intends to develop that teaching, and in which the motor of that development is pastoral, the response to the distinctive contribution made by American culture.

What grounds are there within the text for claiming the document 'develops' accepted Catholic understanding? The change is partly one of style, partly one of detail.

In general the Pastoral, in its analysis of the moral norms governing the use of nuclear weapons, moves beyond what Hollenbach, in describing papal statements, calls a 'homiletic' to an 'analytic' presentation. (62) In this sense the development occurs when the general espousal of accepted norms is enfolded in specific judgments, even if these do not carry the full weight of teaching authority. The development is in the detail: use of nuclear weapons against population centres is rejected: first use of nuclear weapons is rejected: any use, even in the defense of justice and human rights is rejected as posing an unacceptable risk, their being 'no moral justification for submitting the human community to the risk.' (63)

Similarly, in its analysis of the morality of deterrence the Pastoral moves beyond the important and oft-cited papal message to the UN Special Session on Disarmament. The bishops, while accepting the pope's cautious and qualified acceptance of deterrence, gave attention to the nuances of deterrence policy itself. They offer an analysis of deterrence policies, of weapons systems and targeting doctrines. This leads them to oppose first-strike weapons, and strategies which lower the nuclear threshold. This detailed consideration of deterrence policy restricts the possible Christian acceptance of deterrence itself.

In their treatment of the just war ethic and the ethic of non-violence the bishops move beyond the established device of affirming the duty to resist aggression and the corresponding right not to resist by force of arms. (64) The bishops argue that the two ethics are inter-related, even complementary.

A 'unique challenge' to moral reflection is posed by nuclear warfare, they argue:

'...the task before us is not simply to repeat what we have said before: it is first to consider anew whether and how our

religious-moral tradition can assess, direct, contain, and we hope, help to eliminate the threat posed to the human family by the nuclear arsenals of the world.'(65)

In #120-1 they make explicit that the 'new moment' indicates that just war teaching and non-violence are 'distinct but inter-dependent methods of eliminating warfare.' Indeed, the two approaches

'support and complement one another, each preserving the other from distortion.'

The bishops thus self-consciously develop the Catholic tradition of reflection on war and peace. Some features of that development come as the result of more detailed analysis, others, in particular the treatment of the non-violent tradition, can be seen as marking a development of substance. In this context they are indications of an exploratory approach in one fundamental regard.

Such developments or amplifications can be described as exploratory in nature because they, and the document of which they are part, are offered to the whole Church as a contribution to debate. The Pastoral, itself the product of wide-ranging 'listening' to many voices in the Church and the wider community, is offered as a contribution to the policy debate within the nation. It offers what Bishop Malone suggests, a methodology for the teaching task of the Church as it seeks to create a community of conscience. If some participants in the Rome Consultation were convinced of the need to indicate within the text of the Pastoral the varying levels of authority which particular judgements enjoyed, it is doubtful, even when that caveat was made explicitly, whether most readers would have been alert to its nuances. The tenor of the whole document, reflecting the bishops' aim to contribute to the public debate, to a wider 'exploration', is what makes The Challenge of Peace so distinctive.

TEACHING AS A PASTORAL MAGISTERIUM

The particular contribution made by the American bishops may be summarized as a demonstration of the possible development of a 'pastoral magisterium'. In his opening speech at the Council in October 1962, Pope John XXIII had spoken of a magisterium which was 'predominantly pastoral in character', one which would be attuned to the forms of contemporary culture, and it could be argued that this pastoral approach coloured the entire conciliar process.(66) The Council's most distinctive document was thus the Pastoral Constitution, designated as a pastoral rather than dogmatic document, which sought to address problems related to the life of the people of God within the world. It is in that spirit that the bishops saw the task they undertook in their promotion of The Challenge of Peace. The presidential address to the American hierarchy in November 1986 made this explicit:

'together as a national hierarchy, we have found a new and collegial method of teaching. For centuries, hierarchies have been publishing pastoral letters, but for the first time the people of God have been involved in their formation in a more intense manner. For the first time, the church has taught not simply through a finished product, but through the process that led to the finished product. Teaching is not a unilateral activity. One is only teaching if someone is being taught. Teaching and learning are mutually conditional...we have found a method in which our collegial teaching engages and gathers into one community all sectors of the church and many of those outside the church, men and women of good will who are as concerned as we about nuclear war and economic justice.'(67)

In the development of a style of teaching which might be described as a 'pastoral magisterium' the American bishops had to strike a balance. Avery Dulles (68) identified the elements in that balance as the establishment of a participatory style of ecclesial life, without an abdication of the bishops' pastoral vocation. Dulles went on to laud the teaching style of the conference as 'worthy of high commendation'. Describing its character as pre-eminently pastoral, he saw its exercise in a range of linking and mediating functions. Implicitly, he defended the teaching from any suggestion that the bishops had abdicated their distinctive teaching vocation by adopting an

approach on an issue of public policy which simply mirrored generally held assumptions and positions. Its pastoral character was not simply to be thought of in relation to the pastoral needs which an individual bishop might discern and offer a response to. Rather, its pastoral character was revealed by the applying of the collective teaching power of the hierarchy to the particular requirements of a national society. In this, it responded to the shape of American life and its powerful national organizational life. He also defended the validity of the role which we have seen Archbishop May promote, a mediating role between the universal magisterium in Rome and the particular magisterium of the individual bishop in his diocese. It is above all the style of the American bishops' tackling of their teaching task which commends itself to Dulles in the American context.

Does he imply in this that it is the American context which colours that style, and that by implication the style cannot be transferred too readily to other cultural contexts. Is the American methodology ready for export? Certainly he draws attention to features of the U.S.A. which are distinctive. He suggests that in other contexts it is 'customary' for the magisterium to operate by making appeal to its formal authority. In America, such authority is best accepted when it commends itself by reason. Thus, Americans expect to be informed about the process and the rationale behind the bishops' teaching. It is not a peculiarly American phenomenon, however. There is a match between the expectations which any articulate and thoughtful lay culture expects of its bishops and what is promoted by the conciliar documents:

'Vatican II seemed to authorize a consultative style of teaching. In various documents the council stated that the revelation of Christ had been committed not to the hierarchy alone but to the entire people of God, and that the Holy Spirit brings about a sense of the faith in the total membership, both clerical and lay...The US bishops' conference has been outstanding for its effort to involve theologians and lay experts, including frequently representatives of non-Catholic traditions, in an open process of consultation. They have in many cases published preliminary drafts of their documents for comment and criticism. As a result the documents have been issued in improved form, with a greater degree of consensus than would

have been obtainable if the process had been closed and secret.' (69)

A balance must be struck here. The bishops' style of address will properly reflect attitudes of mind and approaches peculiar to American culture, a pattern of indigenization which by its very nature is restricted, in whole or in part, to the church in North America. A more significant question for the American hierarchy itself is whether this style of address, this method of listening, is to be used comprehensively in its thinking on all matters affecting the faithful, or restricted to certain public policy questions? Is the style dictated by the bishops' ignorance or by the very nature of the way in which they now conceive of their teaching vocation?

In response to this latter question it would appear that a mode of research and consultation is emerging as a favoured way of preparing all teaching documents. Whether the wider Catholic Church responds to the method developed by the American bishops remains to be determined. What the N.C.C.B. has done, especially in its two great social pastorals of the eighties, is to encourage the Church by showing the fruits of the approach.

THE PATHS DIVERGE:

THE ROME CONSULTATION OF JANUARY 1983

AND THE ROLE OF BISHOPS' CONFERENCES

The 'fraternal exchange' to which the American bishops were invited had without doubt certain effects on the text of the Pastoral, but its significance is not limited to the way in which it influenced the emergence of the final redaction. It raised critical ecclesiological questions. It focused in a dramatic and explicit way the key question of how power is exercised within the Church, and in particular whether a national bishops' conference has any teaching authority. It allows us to reflect upon the ecclesiological debate within the Catholic church which is conducted in the key areas of 'collegiality', 'catholicity' and 'unity', and to see the strains of an institution coming to terms with shifting centres of authority within its corporate life.

As part of the preparatory process, and in line with Canon 459#2, the American bishops sent their draft Pastoral on peace to several European Bishops' Conferences and to the Holy See. As we have seen, this communication of the text, and the reactions it aroused, prompted the Holy See to offer a 'fraternal exchange' on the problems the Pastoral addressed. The Consultation issued a 'synthesis' prepared by Fr J Schotte of the Justice and Peace Commission which, while not a verbatim report, claimed to contain the main contributions to the debate and was offered as a 'point of reference and a guide' to the U.S. bishops in the work of preparing a final text. The synthesis contained many comments critical both of the content and of the style of the proposed Pastoral. It also made explicit the hesitations felt by the Holy See about the validity of the teaching role of bishops' conferences.

The Consultation was in itself an unusual event. Several other hierarchies were to issue statements on war and peace issues. The U.S. hierarchy itself had an established tradition of issuing

Pastoral Statements: The Church in our Day in 1967, Human Life in Our Day in 1969, Basic Teachings for Religious Education' in 1972, Behold your Mother' in 1974 and To Live in Christ Jesus in 1976.

This was the only occasion on which a national hierarchy in seeking the comments of other bodies in the Church had been called to account, and found itself not only defending the content of the proposed teaching but having the very basis of its teaching authority brought into question.

The two-day meeting in the Old Synod Hall brought together representatives from several European hierarchies, significant figures from the Curia and four prime movers from the National Conference itself.(70) The course of the meeting can be reconstructed from the memo prepared by Fr Schotte, a memo prepared by the American participants Roach and Bernardin, and the letter sent by the two latter to the other bishops of the N.C.C.B. Not only do these documents tell us the substantive issues raised during the Consultation, the manner of their release shows the significance attached by various participants to the moulding of popular perceptions of its outcome.(71)

How did it arise that a 'fraternal exchange' on a public matter of recognized significance, one which had been the subject of numerous statements from within the Church, moved beyond the text of the draft to a wide-ranging debate on the very function of an Episcopal Conference? Answering that question leads us into the debate about the role and competence of national bishops' conferences in the post-conciliar Church.

The debate within the Consultation, while it addressed the content of the draft Pastoral, was dominated by the question posed by Cardinal Ratzinger: 'Does a bishops' conference as such have any teaching authority?'

Cardinal Ratzinger raised this question early in the meeting. Roach and Bernardin first gave an outline of the reasons for the

N.C.C.B.'s initiative, indicating that it was intended to provide pastoral guidance for the Catholic conscience and to help set the right terms for public debate on the morality of war. After their preliminary statements Ratzinger introduced 'five points for discussion', the first of which moved the conversation away from the text to the legitimacy of the task the American bishops had undertaken. Schotte's memo reads at this point:

'A Bishops' Conference as such does not have a 'mandatum docendi'. This belongs only to the individual Bishops, or to the College of Bishops with the Pope. When a Bishop exercises his teaching authority for his diocese, his statements are binding in conscience. Taking into account that the stated purpose of the U.S. Pastoral Letter is to form individual consciences and to offer moral guidance in a public policy debate, how can it be made clear when in a statement of a Bishops' Conference, the Bishops are speaking as Bishops who intend thereby to exercise their teaching authority?'

The Schotte memo suggests that this ecclesiological question ran as a leitmotiv throughout the Consultation, that this 'major question kept returning...[and]...was formulated in different ways.'

The debate which can be discerned behind Schotte's cryptic language seems to have centred on expression of concern about the consequences of what was seen as the failure of the draft to be sensitive to the complex nature of the Church and its engagement with society. The American Letter was viewed, in short, as muddying the waters. This concern can be observed in three areas.

1. The impact of an Episcopal Conference on the Wider Church.

When an individual episcopal conference spoke out on a problem which had implications for other countries there were dangers that it would do so in a way which conflicted with the address of other hierarchies. Could it 'run the risk of proposing views that might possibly conflict with those of other episcopates who are equally involved in the problem?' There was great

nervousness, then, about the impact diverse approaches by episcopal conferences might have. Certainly it is evident that the statement of an episcopal conference in a nation of immense geopolitical significance like the U.S. would be automatically accorded a heightened level of interest, and such interest would proceed from the political context and need not in theory reflect upon the document's intrinsic quality. Yet it was precisely its intrinsic quality which made The Challenge of Peace such an important contribution to the wider Church.

2. The Impact of the Episcopal Conference on Discourse within the Church

If there were anxieties about the possible impact of one national hierarchy's Pastoral Letter on the wider church should it be at variance with the approaches taken by other episcopal conferences, there were similar anxieties about the purely domestic impact of the draft. The ad hoc committee was accused of straying beyond its proper competence by the specific nature of its address. This criticism was based on two judgements. Both appear at first sight to promise a greater flexibility in the Pastoral's teaching. First, the rationale for specificity set up a false choice between the espousal of general principle and the detailed application of such principles. There was another way:

'...should Bishops' Conferences limit their task to stating general principles, or should they also apply these principles to concrete situations, strategies and policies and therefore propose certain practical choices as morally binding? Or is it preferable to address the practical choices in more nuanced and tentative ways using hypotheses and indicating the limiting conditions?'

The Schotte memo clearly promotes this as a better way forward.

Secondly, the specificity of the draft's approach is accused of leading to a dilution of the legitimate diversity of approach which is open to Christian conscience:

'Granted that different practical options are possible, can Bishops in a pastoral letter propose one of these options as their own? Can it be presented as 'the Christian option'? Can the contrary option be 'condemned'?'

Both these judgements, the benefit of a nuanced and tentative approach, and the danger of condemning valid positions honestly held, appear to promote diversity. Their impact can be seen in the final text which makes plain the differing levels of authority accorded to different parts of the text. It is hard to quarrel with the promotion of diversity. Yet this part of the consultation is concerned primarily with the competence of episcopal conferences not the promotion of debate either within the church or by the church with the world. The view reflected in the Schotte memo seems hostile to those very elements in the draft which are exploratory and which, in its words, are 'nuanced and tentative'. The ad hoc committee had established its right to address the specifics of nuclear policy by the diligence of its research. It would have made little sense to amputate those very parts of the draft which reflected that.

The American delegation was robust in its defence of this approach:

'in order to clarify the debate...[they] explained their views as follows:

1. The nuclear threat cannot be adequately addressed solely on the basis of proposing principles. In order to be effective and to be heard the Bishops must be specific. There is a long tradition in the U.S. of the Bishops addressing moral issues not only as a magisterium but as a body of persons exercising a respected role in public debate. In this tradition, pastoral letters are an attempt to interpret principles in the light of the signs of the times.'

3. The Impact of an Episcopal Conference on the Nation

As we have seen, the American bishops defended the methodology in part by making appeal to an established tradition. This expressed itself in the bishops' enjoying a role in relation to

the wider polity. This 'tradition' was not one to which other members of the consultation were receptive.

Could a Pastoral Letter contribute to wider debate or should it be restricted to proposing binding teaching? Was it possible for a Pastoral Letter to address simultaneously both Christian conscience and general public opinion? Could the bishops be at one and the same time 'doctores fidei' and 'concerned citizens of their own country'?

What are the implications of the Rome Consultation for the model of the Church as one which seeks to create a community of conscience? The impact of the 'fraternal exchange' on the drafting process was assessed earlier. Given that a large number of different hierarchies were represented, what did it suggest about the future teaching role of episcopal conferences? That future will be determined by the outcome of two questions.

First, whatever doubts Cardinal Ratzinger cast on the teaching office of a bishops' conference, it is an established reality. Much more important is the question of how much diversity of approach can be tolerated as different hierarchies address common concerns in the field of social justice. That there is diversity is seen by even a cursory glance at the range of teaching initiatives on the nuclear issue. If all teaching is not to be reduced to the simple restating of papal texts, a measure of diversity is inevitable. Can the church see in this diversity of voice a vital part of the task of the teaching church, a disclosure of the debate on critical questions such as deterrence, which is as vital within the world of bishops' conferences as it is within the world of theological discourse? Will this dialogue between hierarchies be allowed to promote the building of a wider community of conscience?

Secondly, will the model of 'listening' adopted by the American ad hoc committee commend itself to other hierarchies? The Schotte memo is frustratingly silent on the views expressed by members of the other hierarchies present. We can know little of

their individual reactions. The test of their attitude towards the methodology adopted by the American hierarchy will come only as they continue their own teaching ministry. Will the American bishops be alone in being at ease with their dual role as 'doctores fidei' and citizens, or will other hierarchies follow them in an explicit attempt to create a community of conscience in their respective cultures?

THE TEACHING AUTHORITY OF BISHOPS' CONFERENCES - THE WIDER DEBATE

The role of Bishops' Conferences as teaching agents is one which emerged as a result of the Second Vatican Council. For the Catholic church in modern times it is practically true to say that there was no teaching organ between the bishop in his diocese and the Pope in the universal Church. Pope John XXIII and the Council he summoned altered this by establishing a new concept of teaching authority. Avery Dulles described this new concept as the promotion of a magisterium, a teaching authority, which was above all pastoral in character.(72) Of all the conciliar documents it was the Pastoral Constitution which was its most 'characteristic' achievement, nothing less than 'a new type of constitution to speak with great emphasis on contingent problems closely related to the life of the people of God in the world of our day.'(73)

The Council not only gave expression to new theological understandings of the church, it embodied them in concrete organizations, one of the most important of these being the national episcopal conference.

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church established the principle that the church should foster the abilities, resources and customs of each people so that each part of the church might contribute through its particular gifts to the good of the whole.(74) If this was a recognition of the benefit of regional diversity it had a strong link to the evangelical task of the church. Thus the Pastoral Constitution (75) speaks of the

'adaptation' in the preaching of the Gospel in which
 'it is possible to create in every country the possibility of
 expressing the message of Christ in suitable terms',
 fostering a living exchange between the church and diverse
 cultures. Structural changes were required if this exchange was
 to be promoted successfully, changes which Dulles described as an
 endorsement of the principle of regionalism and one form of which
 was the episcopal conference.

The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church

recognized that many such bodies already existed, and that they
 'have produced outstanding examples of a more fruitful
 apostolate'. It continued,

'...it would be in the highest degree helpful if in all parts
 of the world the bishops of each country or region would meet
 regularly, so that by sharing their wisdom and experience and
 exchanging views they may jointly formulate a programme for
 the common good of the Church'.(76)

The Conferences' role is seen explicitly as the joint exercise by
 bishops of their pastoral office 'in order to enhance the
 Church's beneficial influence on all men, especially by devising
 forms of the apostolate and apostolic methods suitably adapted to
 the circumstances of the times.'(77) This part of the Decree
 also reflects the concern that if episcopal conferences became
 isolated from one another there could be problems of
 coherence.(78) This was met in part by the establishment of the
 new structure of the Synod of Bishops, to which representative
 bishops, in the most part elected by episcopal conferences, would
 gather to exchange information.

In Ecclesiae Sanctae I (79), Pope Paul VI recommended that
 bishops in those countries which did not have such conferences
 should establish them. Provision was also made for relations
 between conferences. They were encouraged to communicate with
 one another their principal decisions, to send texts or reports
 of the decisions, to

'propos[e] these questions of grave import which in our times
 and in particular circumstances seem of the greatest
 importance'

and to

'indicat[e] the dangers and errors making ground in their
 own country which might also creep into other nations...'

Despite this last rather sinister note the thrust of the texts of the Council on the episcopal conferences was one of positive encouragement.

The Code of Canon Law, issued in 1983, describes their function in terms which confirm these characteristics of the role of episcopal conferences. As it is generally recognized that canon law reflects rather than initiates, it can be assumed that this new model of ongoing episcopal leadership is well-established.

What has been their practical impact? The episcopal conferences have become vigorous bodies within the post-conciliar Church, so vigorous that concern has been voiced that they have infringed both the proper activity of the central magisterium in Rome and the local magisterium of the diocesan bishop.(80) This has prompted a challenge both to their theological status, and in particular to their proper teaching authority.

At the Synod of Bishops in 1985 there were calls for study to be made of these matters, and in the winter of 1987/88 a draft statement prepared by Cardinal Gantin, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, began to circulate. Much of the draft is concerned with questioning whether the episcopal conferences have any mandate to teach, but in this its main interest is in what may be called a 'doctrinal' rather than a 'pastoral' magisterium.

The terms of that debate may well have a conditioning effect on the future activity of episcopal conferences, but it should not distract from the wider perspective of the contribution which these regional or national bodies can make to the church. The Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) and the National Council of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) are the world-wide church's strongest regional and national expressions.(81) In Europe it was the Dutch Catholic church which served as a pilot for the new emphasis on the collegiality of a national episcopate.(82) The

course of Vatican relations with these bodies has not been smooth.

What makes the Dutch model interesting is that the influence of the episcopal conference was not simply the result of an ecclesiological decentralisation. The exercise of power within the Dutch Catholic community was marked by a collegial approach at many levels. Among the innovations was the Dutch Pastoral Council which, although it existed only from 1966 to 1970 decisively shaped the debate in the Netherlands about how bishops, priests and laity could contribute to a collegial view of the Church which went far beyond the collegiality of the hierarchy.

The importance of influential Latin American bishops in the defence of liberation theology, and the Dutch bishops' promotion of experiments in Church structures and teaching documents, prompt us to see in the future dynamism of episcopal conferences the health not only of an individual structure which was, effectively, launched by the Vatican Council, but also of a model of the church as a whole.

If the Gantin draft document concentrates on the question of whether the episcopal conference can enjoy teaching authority in doctrinal matters, the experience of the episcopal conferences, the N.C.C.B. prominent among them, concentrates our attention on the wider questions of the relationship between the Catholic community and its national context. It also prompts us to see here an indication of the health of what has been seen as one of the guiding principles of the post-conciliar church: collegiality. Before we turn to this it is salutary to listen to the voice of Cardinal Ratzinger on the conferences' role. Here we see some of the bases for his interventions at the Rome Consultation.

THE TEACHING AUTHORITY OF BISHOPS' CONFERENCES -
THE RATZINGER VIEW

A case of the development of doctrine?

It was suggested above that studying the debate on the status of bishops' conferences helps us see the tension created by shifts of power within the church. One of the most visible power centres is the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith under its Cardinal Prefect Joseph Ratzinger. The role of the S.C.D.F. is wide-ranging. Although it is most commonly associated with the role of defining, of setting the boundaries in particular of Catholic teaching, that which may be taught and who may teach, its task is more broadly that of promoting good teaching. Its work has aroused much public interest, especially when it is seen as a body which passes judgement on the work of individual theologians, or on approaches to theology such as its statement on liberation theology.(83) Joseph Ratzinger was himself a theologian-observer, a peritus, at the Council, and his public statements on this question allow us to see a development or rather a retrenchment in his own thinking.

In an oft-quoted article in Concilium in July 1965,(84) reproduced in his book 'Das Neue Volk Gottes: Entwürfe zur Ekklesiologie', Ratzinger reflected on the theological implications of the new structure of the episcopal conference.

'Let us dwell for a moment on the bishops' conferences, for these seem to offer themselves today as the best means of concrete plurality in unity. They have their prototype in the synodal activity of the regionally different 'colleges' of the ancient church. They are also a legitimate form of the collegiate structure of the church. One not infrequently hears the opinion that [they] lack all theological basis and could therefore not act in a way that would be binding on an individual bishop. The concept of collegiality, it is said, could be applied only to the common action of the entire episcopate. Here again we have a case where a one-sided and unhistorical systematization breaks down. The 'suprema potestas in universam ecclesiam' which Canon 228(1) ascribes to the ecumenical council applies, of course, only to the college of bishops as a whole in union with the Bishop of Rome. But is it always a question of the suprema potestas in the church? Would not this be very sharply reminiscent of the disciples' quarrel about their rank? We would rather say that the concept of collegiality, besides the office of unity

which pertains to the Pope, signifies an element of variety and adaptability that basically belongs to the structures of the church, but may be actuated in different ways. The collegiality of bishops signifies that there should be in the church (under and in the unity guaranteed by the primacy) an ordered plurality. The bishops' conferences, then, are one of the possible forms of collegiality that is here partially realized but with a view to the totality.'(85)

The desirability of adaptable and flexible structures is eloquently espoused, and criticism levelled at an ecclesiology which is reluctant to allow the emergence of intermediate structures which have, in any case, a proven place in the tradition.

Ratzinger's position has since shifted from that taken in 1965, and he is now publicly hostile to the role developed by episcopal conferences. A far-reaching, though unofficial, statement on the church was developed by him in 1985 in the book 'Rapporto sulla Fede'. This captured headlines in the months before the Extraordinary Synod called by Pope John Paul II to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Second Vatican Council. In his reflections the Cardinal offered a number of reasons for his coolness towards the role of the conferences.(86)

The Second Council had, he says, redressed an imbalance created by the interruption of the work of the First by its stress on the role of the episcopal college. One of the paradoxical effects of this in the post-conciliar church has been that the role of individual bishops is 'restrained' and 'risks being smothered' by the

'inserting of bishops into episcopal conferences that are ever more organized, often with burdensome bureaucratic structures.'(87)

Moreover, the conferences have no theological basis, as they do not belong to the structure of the church as willed by Christ, and have simply a practical function. No episcopal conference, he argued, has a teaching mission, and documents produced by it have no weight of their own save that given to them by the individual bishop. This echoes the language of the Rome Consultation, at which Ratzinger began his presentation by saying:

'A Bishops' conference as such does not have a 'mandatum docendi'. This belongs only to the individual bishops, or to the College of Bishops with the Pope.'(88)

Ratzinger's argument in the Messori interview develops three main criticisms of the episcopal conference. First, he sees the operation of the conference as a diminution of the power and vocation of the individual bishop.

'it happens that with some bishops there is a certain lack of a sense of individual responsibility, and the delegation of his inalienable powers as shepherd and teacher to the structures of the local conference leads to letting what should remain very personal lapse into anonymity.'(89)

Secondly, he dismisses the national context in which the church lives out its life, and which is mirrored in the national conference. as lacking any 'ecclesial dimension'. Thirdly, the Conferences themselves are prisoners both of their bureaucracy and of a desire for consensus:

'...the group of bishops united in the conferences depends in their decisions upon other groups, upon commissions that have been established to prepare draft proposals. It happens then that the search for agreement between the different tendencies and the effort at mediation often yield flattened documents in which decisive positions...are weakened.'(90)

At best, Ratzinger offers us a view of the teaching church in which the responsibility of the individual bishop in his diocese is exercised with clarity and vigour. At worst, this view denies the possibility of any episcopal teaching at other than local level and is stubbornly resistant to the growth of intermediate structures in the church.

An indication of the reason for this shift in Ratzinger's attitude is offered by Peter Hebblethwaite in his book Synod Extraordinary.(91) He suggests that this preference for the role of the individual teaching bishop may arise out of the experience of the S.C.D.F. in its dealings with the powerful Brazilian episcopal conference which strongly supported Leonardo Boff. This support at a Colloquium in Rome highlighted the influence a united hierarchy can exert. Certainly, it seems that in Ratzinger's references to the dynamic of a conference in which

the drive for consensus leads the bishops to be hostage to the drafters and activists, there are echoes of the curial reaction to the American bishops drafting of the peace pastoral.

This brief account of Ratzinger's position on the disputed teaching authority of the Episcopal Conferences demonstrates a shift from one which initially welcomed the new structure to a new desire to limit their function to 'concrete' and 'practical' functions. While the integrity and importance of individual bishops within their dioceses is not likely to be challenged, although the experience in Seattle does not encourage us to be too sanguine,(92) there is in Ratzinger's view no recognition that the teaching activity of the individual bishop is likely to be aided, informed, stimulated and given a higher profile by the concerted action of the bishops in a nation or region. Indeed, this latter view is surely implied by a comment in his Concilium article. Addressing the meaning of episcopal ordination he characterizes the incorporation of the individual bishop in a fraternal association. The bishop is not a mini-pope in his diocese:

'...there can be no room for egotism in dioceses or communities that are concerned only with themselves, leaving all the rest to the care of God and to the Holy see. There must be a common responsibility for one another. Being catholic means, then, being united with others...'(93)

More attention to the process which produced the American Pastoral, not least the interplay between local, diocesan activity and the committee's work, might have reassured him, or at least have reminded him of the vision he once had of the role the episcopal conference could play.

THE ROME CONSULTATION AND
THE EXPERIENCE OF COLLEGIALITY

I suggested above that examining the legitimate role of bishops' conferences illustrates the debate surrounding such concepts as 'collegiality', 'catholicity' and 'unity'.

Collegiality can be described in two distinct ways. Commentators speak of 'effective collegiality', indicating by this the universal solidarity of the bishops of the church who in union with one another and their head possess supreme authority in relation to the church. Collegiality can also be described as 'affective', and in this usage stress is laid less on structures than on an ill-defined collegial spirit, which manifests itself in mutual cooperation and fraternal exchange at any level from the regional to the international. Patrick Granfield argues that both understandings can be deduced from conciliar texts. The main formulation of the doctrine, contained in *Lumen Gentium*, arose out of vigorous debate, and is in his view

'a classic example of compromise: a formulation broad enough to satisfy the various factions and ambiguous enough to allow for further clarification'(94)

The collegial spirit spoken of in the texts was expressed in new or revived structures, such as episcopal conferences and episcopal synods, but in describing the collegial spirit of bishops within the contemporary church, we should not be limited to an examination of the technical powers or competences of agencies such as episcopal conferences as if that examination exhausted the collegial dimension of the church. Rather, these agencies are expressions of a wider reality within the church's self-understanding, what can be described as 'affective collegiality'.

Liberal commentators are not ready to regard the collegial spirit as guaranteed and secure within the post-conciliar church.

'The collegial ideal which might have been the queen of Vatican II's achievements is now a sleeping princess. Some day her prince will come, but on present showing he will need to be a man of unusual qualities, not indeed in order to awaken her....but to occupy the fortress where she has been

placed in suspended animation'.(95)

At the Extraordinary Synod of Bishops in November-December 1985 the U.S. delegate Bishop James Malone revealed such an ambition:

'The expressions of collegiality in the episcopal conference of the US are not just instances of those gimmicks and pragmatic contrivances for which Americans are thought to have such a penchant. We see collegiality as embodied in our conference as an important service to evangelization. How we relate to one another and work together as a conference does indeed reflect some typically American values and procedures. But wholesome values and procedures from our culture serve ecclesial communion and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, just as well as the wholesome values and procedures of any other people and culture.'(96)

The function of episcopal conferences and the nature of collegiality were to be central themes at the Synod. Had the Rome Consultation almost three years earlier proved a 'wholesome' experience of the collegial spirit, or was it an indication of the sleep which had overtaken the princess?

Granfield proposes three essential principles of collegiality.(97) Of these it is his contention that the nature of collegiality is one which promotes dialogue which connects most clearly with the teaching task of the church.(98) Does the Rome Consultation demonstrate the beneficent result of dialogue, or does it lend weight to those who see the ecclesial drama in terms of conflict? Does it show, to recall Sykes' categories, where the balance between power-rejection and power-affirmation lies within the contemporary experience of the Catholic community?

The documents reporting the Consultation contain many references to the collegial spirit. The Schotte memorandum speaks of the whole as 'an inspiring expression of episcopal collegiality', based on the 'common dialogue' conducted by the participants. In bringing forward specific changes to the draft it claims to express the 'consensus of the meeting', and that such recommendations are 'offered as a contribution in a spirit of collegiality'.

The concluding paragraph is couched in collegial and cooperative language:

'At the close of the Informal Consultation Archbishop Roach, President of the N.C.C.B., graciously thanked all the participants for their contribution to the debate. H.E. Cardinal Ratzinger, in his quality of Moderator, and in the name of all, praised the U.S. Bishops for their endeavour to tackle a difficult problem. He expressed the gratitude of the participants for having been brought into the discussion prior to the third drafting of the document. He cited the U.S. Bishops for their 'sensus catholicus' in that they have shown willingness to put their teaching in a universal context.'

Despite the collegial tone of these excerpts it is difficult to characterize the Consultation as genuinely collegial in the sense that a 'fraternal exchange' might suggest. There is little doubt about where the initiative lay. It was the Vatican which hosted the meeting: the Justice and Peace Commission prepared the 'overview' of reactions to and comments on the second draft: the agenda set out by Cardinal Ratzinger framed the pattern of the discussion: Vatican officials had the task of preparing the summary of the discussions.

In all of this the American representatives were perforce reactive, defending their draft and promising further thought on particular issues.

There was no suggestion that the approach taken by the American committee energized the other episcopal representatives into a reassessment of the positions they had previously adopted. Its tone, even in the sanitized Schotte redaction, emerges as combative, even adversarial. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the attitude of the other participants in the Consultation promoted a view of collegiality which valued unity of voice and group loyalty rather than exploration.

Yet, it could well be that rather than a not very subtle form of centralist control, what the Consultation reveals is a church coming to terms with the demands and opportunities of collegial thinking. Granfield writes:

'dialogue is the indispensable vehicle of collegiality

....like any other human dialogue collegiality is a process - lengthy, trying, but ultimately rewarding - of persons attempting to arrive at consensus. The Pope and the bishops, attentive to the developments in theology and sensitive to the lived experience of the People of God, must share accumulated insights with charity, humility and trust in their mutual search for truth.'(99)

If collegiality is a way of promoting dialogue within the church, and one which is of its nature inimical to univocal authority and to unanimity of voice, it marks a shift in the way power is distributed within the church. It is important to remember that we are dealing here only with a shift within the power élite itself, but it does show how awkward a shifting cargo can be in the hold of Peter's barque.

If collegiality is a way of describing how the church community approaches the task of teaching it suggests a way of proceeding which is of its nature exploratory. In 1983 at the N.C.C.B. meeting Archbishop Roach called collegiality a two-way street.

The task of the bishops, he argued, is to
 'interpret the teaching of the Holy Father to the Church in the U.S....[and]...to interpret the experience and insights of the Church in the U.S. to the Holy Father and those who collaborate with him in Rome.'(100)

In this view, collegiality gives birth to a changed attitude as to who teaches in the church, or more precisely suggests that learning and listening should precede speaking. Roach suggests that alongside the well-established role of acting as a medium for the papal voice, the episcopal conference is also a medium through which the voice of a particular culture can be heard. This becomes a matter of moment when such 'two-way traffic' is not restricted to the discrete conversations of ad limina visits, but is played out in public debate and takes shape in the preparation of documents such as The Challenge of Peace. In preparing for the Extraordinary Synod Bishop James Malone had spent time with his brother-bishops at Collegeville, a tradition which was in itself a promoter of affective collegiality and which had a significant influence on the process which led to the final text of the Peace Pastoral. Before the Synod met, Malone spoke of his hopes for the Synod. Implicit in his statement is

the value he accorded to the way in which the collegial experience of the American bishops had been expressed in collegial action:

'I do not share the view that episcopal conferences ought not to play too large or active a role in the life of the Church. Consider the tremendous contribution our conference has made to the public debate on war and peace or our current grappling with Catholic social teaching and the U.S. economy. How could we have made these and other positive contributions except through our episcopal conference?'(101)

How indeed? Here we see confirmation of how what begins as an ecclesiological debate over the relative powers and discretions of episcopal conferences leads to the strengthening of the teaching role of the whole church, as it seeks to create a community of conscience.

FOOTNOTES

1. H Chaigne in Pouvoirs #17, 1981, p27.
Quoted in E Fuchs 'Sex and Power in the Church' in Concilium 197, ed., J Provost and Knut Walf, Edinburgh, T & T Clark. 1988, p28.
2. Karl Gabriel, 'Power in the Contemporary Church in the light of Sociological Theories: Max Weber, Michel Foucault and Hannah Arendt', in Concilium 197, pp29-38.
3. Lecture by Stephen Sykes, 'The Sociology of Power'.
4. Ibid.
5. Gabriel in Concilium 197, op.cit., p29.
6. Andrew Greeley, American Catholics since the Council, op.cit., pp93-100.
7. Charles Curran, Faithful Dissent, Kansas City, Sheed & Ward, 1986.
8. Boff's writings had been under Vatican scrutiny since 1982. Criticism was focused on his Church: Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church. Boff met Ratzinger in Rome in 1984. After study of his responses, the S.C.D.F. issued a detailed critique of his book in March 1985. The main points singled out by the S.C.D.F. were Boff's critique of the Church's hierarchy and institutions, and it was concluded that his views 'endanger the sound doctrine of the faith'. In May he was ordered to maintain 'a respectful silence'. He gave up his editorship of a theological journal and was prohibited from teaching or publishing. The ban lasted almost twelve months. The Boff case came in the midst of the continuing debate on liberation theology. Both Gutiérrez and Sobrino were subject to investigation. The Congregation issued two main statements on liberation theology:
'Instruction on Certain Aspects of the Theology of Liberation', August 1984, Origins, 14:13, September 13th 1984, pp193-204.
and 'Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation', March 22nd, Origins, 15:44, April 17th 1986, pp713-728.
The Boff case demonstrated the power of the Brazilian hierarchy. Cardinals Arnz and Lorscheider accompanied Boff to Rome. and later requested a special meeting with the Pope at the end of the ad limina visits.
Hanson op.cit., p83 sees the action against Boff as a way of attacking the Brazilian episcopal conference.
9. Küng issued a 7,000 word statement in October 1985 which attacked the Vatican for its harassment of theologians and its attitude towards ecumenism.
After the controversy in 1979 which led to Küng's forfeit of

the chair of Catholic Theology at Tübingen, he became professor of ecumenical theology under a compromise acceptable to Küng himself, the university authorities, the West German episcopal conference and the Vatican.

10. Schillebeeckx's conversation with conservative curial officials began immediately after the Second Vatican Council where he was Cardinal Alfrink's personal theologian. see, for example, Ted Schoof ed., The Schillebeeckx Case, New York, Paulist, 1984.
11. Hanson, op.cit., pp82-84.
12. Richard McBrien, 'Theologians under Fire', The Tablet, 240, 986, pp675-677.
Richard McBrien, 'Theologians at Large', The Tablet, 246:7093, 25th January 1992, pp105-106.
'Given their openness to historicity and to the pluralism it yields, Catholic theologians in the United States often find themselves, not surprisingly, at odds with the view in certain quarters of the Vatican that pluralism is somehow the enemy of Catholic identity. For the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in particular, only an enforced orthodoxy can preserve that identity. For the theologian, on the other hand, an enforced orthodoxy is the greatest single obstacle to a living and pastorally relevant theology.'
13. Richard McCormick, 'Notes on Moral Theology 1986', Theological Studies, 48, 1987, pp87-105.
Reference is on p95.
The quotation is from a pastoral letter on dissent by Archbishop Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati.
14. That is the investing of every papal statement of whatever character and in whatever context with the aura of infallibility.
For an analysis of the relationship between the papal teaching office and the church see
Patrick Granfield, The Limits of the Papacy: Authority and Autonomy within the Church, London, Dartman, Longman and Todd, 1987.
and Francis Sullivan, Magisterium: Teaching Authority in the Catholic Church, Dublin, Gill & Macmillan, 1983.
15. The Hunthausen case showed both the limits of Roman power and the ecclesiological assumptions of some Vatican officials. A visitation of the Seattle archdiocese led in 1985 to the appointment of Donald Wuerl as auxiliary bishop with control over liturgy and worship, moral issues, clergy formation, marriage tribunal and instructions for those leaving the priesthood. When, shortly afterwards, Archbishop Hunthausen indicated his inability to work under such restrictions, a committee consisting of Cardinals Bernardin and O'Connor, and Archbishop Quinn of San Francisco worked out a compromise.

Thomas Reese in his book Archbishop makes it clear that the power of the national hierarchy was demonstrated by the appointment of the investigative committee, although if Hunthausen had refused the initial visitation in the first place, Rome's power of initiative would have been reduced. The ecclesiology underlying the Roman attitude is well described by Bernardin, and in particular the way in which disaffected lay Catholics compound the misperception:

'Many Catholics see bishops as mere branch managers with the significant authority and leadership in Rome. That is why some bypass the local bishop or even the episcopal conference in sending letters to the Pro-Nuncio or directly to the Holy See... the practice often belies a faulty ecclesiology... the danger remains that this mentality can reduce both the efficiency and the legitimate authority of the local bishop.'

Joseph Bernardin, 'Changing Styles of Episcopal leadership', U.S. Catholic Historian, Vol.4, p322, quoted in Fogarty, 'North America' in Hastings, ed., op.cit.

16. The 'restorationist' theme is closely identified with Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in an interview given in advance of the Extraordinary Synod of November/December 1985.
17. A.R.C.I.C., The Final Report, CTS/SPCK, London, 1982, pp49-100.
'Authority in the Church I', Authority in the Church: Elucidation', 'Authority in the Church II'.
18. Ibid., p49.
19. Ibid., pp50-51.
20. The reports of A.R.C.I.C. were published one by one with the explicit authorization of the Archbishop of Canterbury and Pope Paul VI. This was in itself novel, for publication preceded acceptance or approval by the two churches. George Tavard, one of the Roman Catholic delegates, wrote of this:
'Paul VI... had tentatively opened a gate to an exercise of persuasive authority that was much closer to the normal functioning of Anglicanism than to customary Roman Catholic practice. In line with this, the reception of the agreed statements should have been given the time needed for free theological discussion in as many centres as possible, so that the competent authorities in the two Churches could eventually arrive at a considered judgment in the light of these reactions and evaluations...'
Customary Roman Catholic practice was followed by the S.C.D.F. in its published 'Observations' when the Final Report was published in 1982. The tone of the 'Observations' was cool, even hostile to the Report's talk of substantial agreement on eucharist, ministry and authority. Tavard comments:
'It indirectly pointed to the difficulty of a normal process of reception in the present organization of the Catholic

Church, as it showed up a built-in weakness of the Roman Curia...'

The S.C.D.F.'s reaction conditioned the reaction given to the Final Report by episcopal conferences.

Reactions to the work of A.R.C.I.C.II by the Holy See seem to indicate a slackening of interest in Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue.

see George Tavard, 'Ecumenical Relations' in Adrian Hastings, ed., op.cit., pp410-416

and Henry Chadwick, 'Unfinished Business', The Tablet, 8th February 1992, pp166-167.

21. A.R.C.I.C., The Final Report, op.cit.,p77.
22. James Malone, 'The Role of the Bishop as Teacher and Listener', in D Corrado and J Hinchley eds., Shepherds Speak, New York, Crossroad, 1986, pp11-19.
23. Ibid., p17.
24. Ibid., p19.
25. Origins, 19:23, November 9th 1989, pp370-375.
Malone was giving a lecture as part of a series of lectures commemorating the bicentennial of the U.S. hierarchy at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York.
26. Joseph Fitzmyer, 'John Paul II, Academic Freedom and the Magisterium', America, 141:13, November 3rd 1979, p249.
27. John Orme Mills, preface to 'What counts as Catholic teaching?', New Blackfriars, 70:824, February 1989, pp55-56.
28. Edmund Hill, Ministry and Authority in the Catholic Church, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1988
and 'Who does the teaching in the Church?', in New Blackfriars, 70:824, op.cit.
29. E. Hill, in New Blackfriars, op.cit., p67.
30. Nicholas Lash, 'The Difficulty of Making Sense', New Blackfriars, op.cit., pp74-84.
31. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
32. Ibid.
33. Opportunities for Peace, text in Briefing, Vol.18 #24, 9th December 1988
34. The Tablet, 26th November 1988, p1362.
35. Pope John Paul II, speech at Coventry, op.cit.
36. Ibid.

37. Text given in Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, January 4th 1983.
38. Text issued by German Bishops' Conference under the title 'Bischöfe zum Frieden'.
39. Ibid.
40. English text in James Schall ed., Bishops' Pastoral Letters, San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 1984, pp33-99.
41. Noted in Hanson op.cit., p304.
42. Summary in Ibid., pp317-318.
'The initiatives of the Japanese bishops on the issues of peace and human rights mark a startling departure from the traditional Japanese Catholic silence on public issues.'
43. Noted in Mark Heirman, 'Bishops' Conferences on War and Peace in 1983', Cross Currents, Fall 1983, p276, 282-283.
44. Ibid., pp283-284.
45. Schall, p101-120.
46. Francis Winters, 'Nuclear Deterrence Morality: Atlantic Community Bishops in Tension', Theological Studies, 43, 1982, pp428-447.
47. Disarmament and Peace, Statement by the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference of Scotland, 16th March 1982.
The Scottish bishops raised the question of public knowledge in the face of governmental secrecy:
'A further ground for perplexity is the lack of verifiable information about our government's preparations and intentions... Whatever is done will be done in our name and, in a democracy, with our presumed agreement. The conscience of a nation should not be compelled to hazard guesses against a background of an indefinite number of possibilities.'
48. see introduction to his Bishops' Pastoral Letters, op.cit.
49. #95 in Schall, ed., op.cit., p65.
50. #142, Ibid., p79.
51. #144, Ibid., p80.
52. #153, Ibid., p83.
53. Richard McCormick, Notes on Moral Theology 1981 through 1984, University Press of America, 1984, pp208ff.
54. Ibid., p209.

55. Ibid.
56. Gagner la Paix #9, Schall op.cit., p104.
57. James Malone, Origins, op.cit., p371.
58. The Challenge of Peace, #2.
59. John Cummins, 'Bishops and Theologians in the American Church: Their Mutual Contributions', in Corrado and Hinchey, op.cit., pp49-61. Reference is on pp58-59.
60. Castelli, op.cit., pp27-39.
61. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
'The concluding pages of the draft... seem ambiguous when they refer to pluralism of opinion on the matter touched upon in the Pastoral and at the same time urge substantial consensus. Substantial consensus must be based on doctrine and does not flow from debate. It is wrong to propose the teaching of the Bishops merely as a basis for debate: the teaching ministry of the Bishops means that they lead the People of God and therefore their teaching should not be obscured or reduced to one element among several in a free debate.'
62. David Hollenbach, 'The Challenge of Peace in the Context of Recent Church Teachings', in P Murnion ed., op.cit., p3-15. Reference is on p11.
63. The Challenge of Peace, #159.
64. Ibid., #118.
65. Ibid., #122.
66. This is the argument advanced by Avery Dulles in an address to the National Catholic Educational Association Convention in April 1988 in New York.
Origins, 17:46, April 28th 1988, pp789-796.
For the vision which Pope John XXIII had of the Council see Peter Hebblethwaite, John XXIII: Pope of the Council, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1984.
EEY Hales, Pope John and his Revolution, London, Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1965,
and for an account of the Council which formed public attitudes while it was still in session
Xavier Rynne, Letters from Vatican City, New York, Farrar, Strauss & Co., 1963.
The text of Pope John's speech is in
Walter Abbott, The Documents of Vatican II, London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1966, pp710-719.
67. Marginal editorial comment on speech to N.C.C.B. in November 1986 by James Malone, Bishop of Youngstown, President of the Conference.
Origins, 17:46, April 28th 1988, p793.

68. Dulles in Origins, 17:46, op.cit.
69. Ibid., p796.
70. The Schotte memorandum gives a full list of the participants.
There were representatives from seven European hierarchies: France, West Germany, England and Wales, Scotland (these last two grouped as one), Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands. France, Germany and Scotland were represented in part by the Presidents of the Bishops' Conference. The heavy representation of Scotland with its two archbishops and Italy whose episcopal conference issued no major statement on the question of war and peace is surprising. Pax Christi was represented by bishops from France and the Netherlands, while Bishop Bär of Rotterdam represented the church's presence in the armed forces.
From the Holy See came three members of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, six members of the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church led by its two senior figures, Casaroli and Silvestrini, and Jan Schotte from the Pontifical Commission 'Iustitia et Pax'. The American hierarchy was represented by Archbishop Roach of St. Paul Minneapolis, President of the N.C.C.B., Joseph Bernardin, Daniel Hoyer, Secretary of the N.C.C.B. and Bryan Hehir.
71. Castelli, op.cit., p139.
72. Dulles, op.cit.
73. Ibid., p791.
74. Lumen Gentium #13
in Flannery ed., Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents op.cit., pp364-365.
75. Gaudium et Spes #44
Ibid., p946.
76. Christus Dominus #37
Ibid., p587.
77. #38(1) Ibid.
78. #38(5) Ibid. p588.
'...contacts between episcopal conferences of different countries are to be encouraged for the promotion of the common good.'
79. Ibid., p591-610, especially pp609-610.
'Apostolic Letter, written Motu Proprio, on the Implementation of the Decrees Christus Dominus, Presbyterorum Ordinis and Perfectae Caritas'.
80. see the 'Draft Statement on Episcopal Conferences' prepared by the Vatican Congregation for Bishops.

One of the draft's concerns was the authority of the conference in relation to an individual bishop's authority in his diocese:

'Episcopal conferences were not instituted for the pastoral government of a nation nor to substitute the diocesan bishops as a kind of superior or parallel government, but to help them in the fulfillment of some common tasks... it must be kept in mind that the diocesan bishops who belong to the episcopal conference are, iure divino, ordinary and proper pastors of the particular churches over which they have been set... such titles do not apply to the episcopal conference.'

81. Hanson op.cit., p59-60.
see also John Eagleson and Philip Scharper eds., Puebla and Beyond, New York, Maryknoll Orbis, 1979.
82. see John Coleman, The Evolution of Dutch Catholicism 1958-1974, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1978.
Peter Hebblethwaite, The Runaway Church, London, Collins, 1975, Chapter 3.
83. There were two statements on liberation theology issued from the S.C.D.F.
In 1984 Ratzinger issued an Instruction strongly critical of much that had animated the church in Latin America after the 1968 Medellin Assembly.
After a summit meeting in Rome to settle the dispute between the S.C.D.F. and Leonardo Boff a second 'Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation' was issued. Over 12,000 words in length, it demonstrated a change of mind in Vatican attitudes towards the new ecclesial forms in Latin America.
84. 'The Pastoral Implications of Episcopal Collegiality', Concilium, 1, 1965.
85. Ibid., p30.
86. V. Messori, The Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church, San Francisco, 1985, pp58-60.
87. Ibid.
88. Schotte memorandum op.cit.
89. Messori, op.cit.
90. Ibid.
91. Peter Hebblethwaite, Synod Extraordinary, London, Dartman, Longman & Todd, 1986. Reference on p61.
92. The investigation of Raymond Hunthausen's leadership in the archdiocese of Seattle and the appointment of an auxiliary bishop with wide powers was mentioned above. See footnote 15.

93. Ratzinger, 'The Pastoral Implications of Episcopal Collegiality', op.cit.
94. Granfield, op.cit., p80.
The 'Draft Statement on Episcopal Conferences' makes the following distinction:
'...there are various meanings to the term collegiality... corresponding to its many actualizations... it is necessary to distinguish accurately those which involve the college as such with its head from those which gather the bishops in the name of their pastoral concern, but not in their universality. While the first express the exercise of collegiality in the strict sense and involve the actio collegialis, for the second, on the other hand, generated by affectus collegialis, one can make a reference to the notion of collegiality according to an analogical, theologically improper, use... for the latter it is more precise to use the concept of coresponsibility...'
95. Gabriel Daly, 'Faith and Theology: The Ultramontane Influence', The Tablet, April 18-25, 1981, p381.
96. Hebblethwaite, Synod Extraordinary, op.cit., p118.
97. Granfield, op.cit., pp82-88.
98. Ibid., p86.
'Dialogue is the indispensable vehicle of collegiality. We sometimes overlook this dialogic dimension of revealed truth, categorizing dialogue as a mere social technique. Actually dialogue permeates our Christian faith...'
99. Ibid., pp86-87.
100. Origins, 13:24, November 24th 1983, p403.
101. Malone is quoted in Hebblethwaite, Synod Extraordinary, op.cit., p66.

FAREWELL COLUMBIA!LAND OF SOFT DELIGHT

(Charles Dickens)

There must have been occasions in the last eight years when Bishop Joseph Imesch of Joliet, Illinois, longed for the simplicity of drafting a pastoral letter on nuclear war and peace. It was in 1984 that the committee set up by the N.C.C.B. under his chairmanship began work on a pastoral letter on women. The third draft was released only in April 1992, and Bishop Imesch felt moved to protest at those who had urged the abandonment of the project. He defended the purpose of the letter in which if 'it can't say it all, at least let us say what can be said'. (1)

In similar vein, Archbishop Rembert Weakland wrote in 1984, when the committee he chaired on the economy was still in the midst of work on their first draft:

'As you read the pastoral letter, remember that it is just a beginning. Unlike the recent one on nuclear ethics, ethical reflections on the economy do not lend themselves to a neat package. Many have noted that the nuclear statement is just the opening round in a long discussion. Imagine what our draft on the economy will be!' (2)

For those who have followed the process of preparation of the peace pastoral by Joseph Bernardin and his committee, the task has not always seemed so easy. What Imesch and Weakland demonstrate is that in studying The Challenge of Peace and the process which lay behind it, we are not dealing with an isolated teaching initiative by the American hierarchy. Rather, if the proposed pastoral on women reaches a final form, it is one of three major teaching documents, each the result of extensive consultation, each designed to build consensus among the bishops, each attempting to meet public deadlines, each designed to be accessible to a public audience. This dramatic development within the American church had few precedents within the Catholic community, and recalling how the American bishops had agonised over a public reaction to the Vietnam war which, when it did

come, was too little too late, it originates in what would then have seemed a highly implausible source.

We have tried to suggest some of the features which made this series of initiatives possible: the 'new moment' for the church in the U.S.A. with its manifestation in changed political and social circumstances; the new ecclesial life of the post-conciliar church which gave birth to a changing pattern of teaching and learning; the wider ecclesial and public life of the United States which enabled the Catholic church to move to the centre of public life.

We have tried also to suggest those points in the bishops' endeavour which encountered resistance from either political or ecclesiastical sources, from an Administration uneasy about public reaction to the drafts, from those voices in Rome uneasy about the implications for the wider Catholic community and from conservative lay Catholic opinion. We have tried also to show that these tensions demonstrate the dynamic of the post-conciliar Catholic church. If the Second Vatican Council gave impetus to the development of a public theology which implied a church more responsive to the wealth of diverse social cultures, the American bishops find themselves in the vanguard of such a development. By the early 1980's they were sufficiently confident of the place of the church within American culture, and of the place of the American Catholic community within the universal church, to address two great contemporary issues, those of nuclear war and the economy, and in doing so to craft their response in such a way that they had in mind not only their own faith community but the wider public community.

In this their explicit aim was to create a community of conscience. In concluding this study we must ask how successful the bishops were in that aim, and whether in their teaching enterprise they have gifted something of abiding value to the church.

On emerging from the Chicago meeting which had approved the final text of The Challenge of Peace one of the drafting committee was asked how he expected Catholics to respond. He replied, 'Slowly!'.

The Challenge of Peace was issued in order to bring about change. That is what is implied in the bishops' desire to create a community of conscience, to develop and foster within the church a community which is marked by reflection, learning and action, a community committed to a practical theology of peace.

At various points we have stressed how different the tone of the pastoral is from that evident in other teaching documents, that it is analytical as well as hortatory. What kind of ecclesiology does this promote?

A pluralist church

It promotes an ecclesiology which gives value to pluralism. This is what is implicit in the image of the church as a 'big church', which allows room for diversity. On a major and complex issue of social and political significance such as nuclear war and deterrence there is a recognized and appropriate diversity of view. This is at one level simply the recognition that such a diversity exists, that the American Catholic community contains both Thomas Gumbleton and John O'Connor, Dorothy Day and Francis Spellman. But it goes further and recognizes in that diversity the authentic voice of Catholicism.

The promotion of pluralism, and the boundaries of that diversity, are seen in those parts of The Challenge of Peace which deal with the relationship of pacifism to the just war tradition. That cautious acceptance which had been accorded to pacifism in the Pastoral Constitution was here extended and affirmed. The whole church cannot be pacifist, any more than it can be bellicist, although, as we saw, there are points in the text when the bishops appear particularly responsive to pacifism's moral claim.

The nature of the Catholic church is still profoundly different from the 'peace churches', and Bryan Hehir points out that the question here is not so much where the church stands on this or any other issue but where the church stands in society.(3)

This does not imply that the church acts to promote a 'flabby' pluralism in which all and any position is possible.(4) That arguably is more characteristic of the charge laid against liberal Anglicanism. It does imply that within the Catholic community the hierarchy of truths, the careful elaboration of principle and prudential judgment, is a method of safeguarding pluralism. Appropriately employed it does not allocate pieces of teaching to carefully graded levels of significance as a method of exalting the papal at the expense of all else. It can be a way of recognizing that on complex problems there cannot be that utter certainty which is free from all error. It can recognize the role of mediation, as the gospel imperatives are mediated through reason and the human sciences. It can protect the individual Catholic from an imperial teaching style, and is stressed in the context of the 'informal consultation' in Rome in January 1983. (5) Here proper respect for the freedom of the Christian is seen as encouraging the making explicit of the varying levels of authority which the bishops' conclusions carry.

The question for an observer outwith the Catholic community is just how far that individual freedom extends. The question would seem most pertinent in relation to the church's teaching initiatives on matters of sexual morality. How do we steer the course between the Scylla of rampant individualism and exaltation of personal choice masquerading as conscience and the Charybdis of an autocratic and prescriptive teaching style which, as it is resisted, diminishes all teaching? The experience of the American church as it is characterized by the response to papal teaching may indicate that the answer to that puzzle may be worked out more by the actions and reactions of the people of God than by the makers of teaching, and that in forming their consciences the faithful will see in church teaching only one element of their learning.

The church as a community of discourse

It is this second feature which will be integral to the protection of the communal nature of the church from the inroads of American individualism as Bellah and others describe it. The inner coherence of the church can no longer depend upon the links which so marked its life at earlier stages, coherence of ethnic identity, a shared language, worship and education. Nor can that coherence be imposed by particular patterns of episcopal leadership. The character of the American hierarchy was radically altered under the influence of the apostolic delegate Jean Jadot, given the task by Pope Paul VI of forming a more pastorally oriented hierarchy. There is a sense in which the fruits of that episcopal model are seen in the three great social pastorals of the 1980's. The rather different pattern of episcopal appointment promoted by Pio Laghi will change the character of the American hierarchy, but the character of the American Catholic community as a whole cannot be so easily manipulated. Nor should we assume that it is inevitably the lay voice which is in the van. Madonna Kolbenschlag has shown how the most articulate and informed radical voice is that of the women religious.(6)

If there are to be strains between a more conservative hierarchy and its people the vital need is for the church to remain a community of discourse. Such a community is marked by attentive listening as well as teaching, or as the peace pastoral itself made plain by civility and charity as well as commitment. Nicholas Lash proposes the importance in such a community of 'courtesy'. In a church where discourse is carried out with courtesy, he suggests, we

'refrain from imposing opinions, plans, and purposes upon each other 'willy-nilly'. Such courtesy is not a matter of supposing all opinions to be equally correct, all plans sensible or purposes noble. On the contrary: it is when opinions held and purposes furthered with passionate conviction come into conflict that something like courtesy is called for if the outcome is not to be the breakdown of relationship, the domination of one group or individual by another.' (7)

It is in this context of pluralism and discourse that we see something of what the Catholic tradition of social teaching as it is being promoted by the American hierarchy can bring to the wider church. In this sense the traditional attentiveness to the papal teaching office is misplaced. It is precisely the ability of a national hierarchy reacting to what it discerns in its own culture, drawing on the wider wisdom of the faith community and searching for a dialogue with both, which offers an attractive model of teaching. There is displayed here a double advantage: while the bishops are detached from the political elite, they benefit from the public attention deriving from the new 'place' of the Catholic community in America. It may be at this level that understanding will develop in the Catholic church of what Anglicans value in their provincially-biased ecclesial structures. On the other hand, some Anglicans may be envious of the freedom and confidence displayed by the American hierarchy in its teaching, in contrast for example with the bruising experience of reactions to Faith in the City.

More immediately, was the bishops' aim of creating a community of conscience within the church realized?

The signs of the reception of the Pastoral within the Catholic community six years after publication were modest. D'Antonio suggests that by 1989 neither it nor Justice for All were 'part of the Catholic laity's consciousness.'⁽⁸⁾ A survey suggested that by 1987 more than two-thirds of Catholic Americans had not heard of the peace pastoral while 71% were ignorant of the economic pastoral. He concludes:

'the letters do not seem to be having the widespread impact that some writers think'.

Murphy and others who were fearful of the impact of the educational enterprise within the church might rest easy. ⁽⁹⁾ D'Antonio speaks of the persistent difficulty faced by the church in reaching relatively marginalized groups, the less-educated, blue-collar community, and the failure of the church to develop a well-targeted educational policy. Of those who did have

knowledge of the pastorals D'Antonio suggests that it is those with a high level of interest in church-life who are more likely to support the bishops' initiative, while marginal Catholics are more likely to be dismissive. It is thus a pattern of support based on depth of attachment to the church rather than conventional splits into liberal and conservative which colour lay Catholics' reaction to their bishops' teaching. The two major pastoral letters have had the effect of strengthening the commitment of those who support the general tenor of the bishops' teaching, but of fostering alienation among those who disagree.(10)

This is rather a sombre picture. Given the length of the process, the high profile accorded it by the institutional church and the media interest which accompanied it, it may seem that such a disappointing set of conclusions vitiates the enterprise.

It may in fact open up a new way of reflecting upon 'reception' which helps us understand the bishops' teaching task better. For if the content of the pastoral remained undiscovered by many lay Catholics, then the process itself was given considerable approval ratings. The process adopted and developed by the Bernardin committee was applauded as the result of a desire to share responsibility with the laity. It was seen as an 'open' process, and there was approval for the fact of the bishops' writing such a teaching document. (11)

Might it be that here is the key to understanding the way in which the bishops sought to address two audiences, the ecclesial and the civil, albeit a way which emerged only after the document had entered the public domain. Could it be that it was the reception of the document which helped form a community of conscience within the wider civil society, and it was the reception of the process which most enlivened the Catholic community itself?

Put thus baldly, there are difficulties with such a judgment. The main problem for the bishops would be that their ability to

effect change at policy level is diminished, for the conclusion of studies of the lobbying activity of the church suggests that the bishops are most effective when they operate indirectly, through an informed and conscientized lay opinion. Put bluntly, if their people do not read their pastoral can their consciences be formed? To offer a negative to this question would be to ignore two significant points about the pastoral.

First, although it was the most public teaching document on nuclear war, with the exception of 'prophetic' voices like those in Pax Christi, it was itself part of that whole corpus of teaching developed at every level from pope to parish, and perhaps most significantly at the level of an individual diocese. It was not the only instrument of conscientization. More radical than some, less radical than others, The Challenge of Peace may at least have acted as a point of reference to the bishops of the N.C.C.B. as they sought to respond as individual teachers to the challenge of peace.

Secondly, because it was a pastoral document it had a reactive element. Were the bishops more radical than their people? The radicalism lay as much in the attention they paid to the fine detail, such as targeting, as in their overall address. If d'Antonio is correct, the pastoral had a confirming effect rather than an initiating one on Catholic opinion.

That is, in the end, too constricted a view of what teaching within the church is, for it suggests that its principal effect is simply one of articulation, of giving voice to what is experienced within the church or within the world. That is a legitimate task but it does not exhaust the teaching vocation. That vocation, perhaps particularly when it is carried out at the level of a national hierarchy, is committed to a process of discovery and clarification. It is this that Lash seems to propose and the possibility of which is seen in the current teaching ministry of the American episcopate:

'To be human is to be participant in a kind of education. The history of humankind is a history of interpretative

practice, a history of attempting to make sense of our surroundings and ourselves, to make the world a home. Sometimes we learn from our mistakes. Sometimes we do not...there are no shortcuts or final solutions. To insist there are [none]...does not, however, either hand us over to the 'experts' or reduce Christianity to an open-ended seminar or (worse) some kind of supermarket of privately preferred beliefs...Our duty, then, as Christians is to throw some light on things, to clarify the situation... Clarification requires concreteness and precision. And true clarity is incompatible with oversimplification...Teaching which clarifies the question respects both those it serves and the materials (the words and facts, the stories and the arguments, the data) with which it works. Such teaching, we might say, is courteous.' (7A)

If the Catholic community can promote this model of learning and teaching its vocation will indeed be a gift to the whole church, and not to the church alone, for it will give a model of discourse to the civil as well as the ecclesial community.

A process of learning and teaching in which listening can lead to clarification and a courteous address to the world is not without difficulties. Some of them are revealed in the very seriousness with which the American bishops have taken their process of listening.

Even a cursory glance at the level of consultation engaged in by the Weakland committee in preparing the pastoral on economic matters demonstrates the seriousness of the method which we have already seen employed by Bernardin. The list of the hearings conducted by the Weakland committee as appended to the third draft of Justice for All indicates the number of people consulted growing markedly from December 1983 onwards.(12) Moreover, in the Weakland committee's project what Americans refer to as 'the academy' did not wait to be approached but took an initiative. A conference was convened by the Center for Ethics and Religious Values in Business at the University of Notre Dame while the first draft was still in preparation specifically to aid the work. Weakland noted in the book which emerged after the event:

'We desired expertise in the facts from those who are well qualified and that is what we were given...at the same time we wanted others to be bishop and attack the problem from the point of view of Catholic social teaching...I believe that we

are in a special moment - a new moment in the history of the Church in the U.S.A.' (13)

The Weakland committee's labours pale beside the massive consultative exercise inaugurated by the committee working on the pastoral letter on women. In its work the committee chaired by Joseph Imesch has consulted with no fewer than 75,000 women in one hundred dioceses. In May 1991 the drafters met with officials at the Vatican and representatives from thirteen national hierarchies. Particularly troublesome for the Vatican was the fact that the draft spoke on the issue of the ordination of women. Particularly troubled within the United States were voices such as those in the Leadership Conference of Women Religious who argued against any publication of a pastoral because of the institutionalized patriarchy of the church.

Here the effect of consultation has been to delay drafts, compelling the committee to draw back from any real treatment of the question of ordination, and to expose the drafters to the suggestion that the letter should have a lower status than that of a pastoral letter.

Is there an indication in this experience that a dividing line may have been crossed between a process which leads, however slowly, to a teaching product and a process which itself becomes the teaching? At this stage it seems that the pastoral on women may test this out.

Having established this method of listening before teaching the American bishops cannot retreat. The pattern once established cannot be broken without causing enormous damage to the church's credibility. Have the American bishops been wise to develop 'encyclical-like' pastorals, where the discovery of the diversity within the church almost precludes a response? Might this pastoral mark the breaking-point of this style of teaching? It may be that in the events of the 1980's, as we watch the bishops' drafting committees at work we are seeing a transitional time in which the demands of a church community eager to debate, and

confident in its own voice, will be increasingly incompatible with a traditional teaching instrument. If the failure of Humanae Vitae damaged the credibility of papal teaching, especially when expectation of a different outcome had been raised by the work of the pontifical commission, can the process of consultation which the American bishops have fostered remain tied to what in the end is an episcopal teaching document? Will the bishops now withdraw from such an ambitious level of teaching or will they continue to risk the painful discovery of what is in the mind of many of the members of the church and submit their teaching as part of the discovery by the whole community?

Finally, if it is legitimate to see in the process the real heart of the teaching within the church what can be said about the impact of the process and the document itself upon the church's engagement with public culture? There are two features to draw attention to.

First, it is difficult to see in the objective of creating a community of conscience anything more concrete than the attempt to mould public opinion. This is what is implied in the Pastoral Constitution when it speaks of the reliance of state leaders upon public opinion and public attitudes in matters of building peace.(14) This is the line advanced by Bryan Hehir.

In a society which is democratic the church does not operate as a political machine nor does it have a unique charism as a political institution. It is, he suggests, a community which has the capacity to develop an angle of moral and religious vision in a 'broad community which exists within the wider community.'(15) We may take this to mean that the institutional church of itself does not seek to implant that vision, but that its task is indirect, to enliven the community of faith whose task within the world is the promotion of those same visions and hopes.

Hehir instances the debate in the U.S. over the Panama Canal negotiations. He talks about an 'atmosphere' which almost

destroyed the treaty, even although the public debate was short. It is this 'atmosphere' which the church is called upon to affect, and it is accomplished by the Christian as citizen. This is a very difficult idea to evaluate. When is it right for the church to work slowly and patiently at this general conscientization, and when is it right to adopt a more confrontational line? When is it right for the church to stand over against societal norms and when is it right to adapt to new social facts? There is a sense in which the promotion of the 'consistent ethic' is persuasive here, for it springs from a vision of the sanctity of life which is then fleshed in application to a wide range of ethical decisions. It allows the church to find allies on the nuclear question in different places from those it attracts on the question of abortion. Hehir, we may think, is a little disingenuous here. Creating a community of conscience, shaping a public debate, requires more than what he seems to be proposing. Atmosphere, we may think, is a particularly elusive object to shape.

If it is more than Hehir suggests, the public role of the teaching church may be bound up with Lash's suggestion of clarification and discernment. Discerning the signs of the times is in part related to a sense of timing, judging the moment correctly. There is much talk of the new moment. In the American context that is seen as indicating a new place for the church in American society as well as a new moment in the public perception of the dangers of nuclear war which combine to create the conditions for the bishops' teaching initiative.

Right timing may equally arise out of crisis. The Malawian Catholic church operates in a culture radically different from that in North America. When the bishops issued their Lenten pastoral letter on 10th March, 1992, criticising human rights violations by the regime of President Hastings Banda the government reacted swiftly. The bishops were reported as having been interrogated by the police and placed under house arrest. They were denounced as 'satanic Christians' and there were sinister threats of assassination. The value of the bishops'

action and the sense of there being a right time for this piece of prophetic teaching is shown by the fact that Malawian opposition groups in exile in Lusaka were emboldened by the bishops' action to elect new leaders and plan more active opposition. (16)

The Malawian hierarchy aimed to bring about change. That was also the objective of the peace pastoral. The effectiveness of such initiatives is closely related to the judgment of when an initiative is needed.

In addition to the address to the wide community of the nation, teaching initiatives can be directed at policy-makers. This is clear in the way the Bernardin and Weakland committees went about the preparation of their task.

When the American bishops were preparing the economics pastoral Gregory Baum, who had advised the Canadian bishops in their 1983 statement, criticised the American attempt to build consensus among Catholics on economic questions. He wrote:

'The search for a 'broad consensus' in the rich nations may at this particular time prevent the church from offering a prophetic message'.

Commenting on this Oliver Williams rejects Baum's proposition for its failure to recognize that the building of a popular consensus is necessary precisely in order to enlist the support of those with the capacity to work for change and achieve it. (17)

The world of public discourse in which the peace pastoral was achieved had space for both prophecy and consensus-building, just as the ad hoc committee found space for Gumbleton, O'Connor and Bernardin. That in itself demonstrates the creative possibilities which a community of discourse has as it seeks to promote a similar discourse within the polity.

In September 1990, in the course of a special assembly of the American bishops, Joseph Bernardin responded to presentations by

Robert Bellah and Cardinal Danneels.(18)

Let the last word be his:

'Like the apostles, who had to resolve new problems for which they had no explicit directions, we too must address..[the] ..critical issues in the context of our American culture and needs...The question is how to relate the essentials of Christian faith and life to the mores and mentality of our people in a way that is credible and persuasive, in a way that will motivate them to look beyond themselves and beyond cultural biases and limitations. No one of us can resolve these problems alone; they require the best efforts of all of us...this will at times create tensions, but if we approach our task in faith and with humility and openness, the tensions can be constructive...the episcopal conference, always in union with the Holy See, is a primary locus for the analysis, reflection, consultation, discernment and planning needed to ensure these issues are properly addressed....'

Martial Cadenza

I

Only this evening I saw again low in the sky
 The evening star, at the beginning of winter, the star
 That in spring will crown every western horizon.
 Again... as if it came back, as if life came back,
 Not in a later son, a different daughter, another
 place,
 But as if evening found us young, still young,
 Still walking in a present of our own.

II

It was like sudden time in a world without time,
 This world, this place, the street in which I was,
 Without time: as that which is not has no time,
 Is not, or is of what there was, is full
 Of the silence before the armies, armies without
 Either trumpets or drums, the commanders mute, the
 arms
 On the ground, fixed fast in a profound defeat.

III

What had this star to do with the world it lit,
 With the blank skies over England, over France
 And above the German camps? It looked apart.
 Yet it is this that shall maintain - itself
 Is time, apart from any past, apart
 From any future, the ever-living and being,
 The ever-breathing and moving, the constant fire.

IV

The present close, the present realizes,
 Not the symbol but that for which the symbol stands,
 The vivid thing in the air that never changes,
 Though the air change. Only this evening I saw it
 again,
 At the beginning of winter, and I walked and talked
 Again, and lived and was again, and breathed again
 And moved again and flashed again, time flashed again.

Wallace Stevens

FOOTNOTES

1. The Tablet, 18:25, 18th April 1992, p520.
2. Foreword to Catholic Social Teaching and the United States Economy, ed. John Houck, and Oliver Williams, University Press of America, 1984, p.xi.
3. J.B. Hehir, 'The Church and the Arms Race', Catholic Information Services, 1982, p15.
4. The image is Charles Curran's see his Directions in Catholic Social Ethics, op.cit., p216.
5. Schotte memorandum, op.cit.
6. Kolbenschlag, op.cit.
7. Lash, 'The Difficulty of Making Sense', op.cit.
8. d'Antonio, op.cit., p166.
9. Murphy, Betraying the Bishops, op.cit.
10. d'Antonio, op.cit., pp179-181.
11. Ibid.
12. 'Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy', the third draft, Origins, 16:3, June 5th, 1986.
13. Houck and Williams eds., op.cit., p.x.
14. Gaudium et Spes, #82.
15. Hehir, 'The Church and the Arms Race', op.cit., p20.
16. Reports in Independent on Sunday, 5th April 1992, The Tablet, 246:7912, 28th March p414, and 246:7913, 4th April 1992, p451.
17. Baum's article in National Catholic Reporter referred to in Oliver Williams, 'The Making of a Pastoral letter', in Houck and Williams, eds., op.cit., pp16-17.
18. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin in Origins, 20:14, September 3rd 1990, p222.

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